AN HISTORICAL NARRATIVE OF THE GREAT and TERRIBLE FIRE of LONDON, Sept. 2nd 1666:

WITH

Some parallel CASES, and occasional NOTES.

Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffic: therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, and will bring thee to ashes upon the earth, in the sight of all them that behold thee. EZEK. XXVIII. 18.

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HISTORICAL NARRATIVE OF THE FIRE of LONDON.

The Lord came with flames of fire: He made them like a fiery oven in the time of his wrath; the fire consumed them. ISAIAH lxvii. 15. PSAL. xxi. 9.

NO sooner was the plague so abated in London, that the inhabitants began to return to their habitations, than a most dreadful fire broke out in the city, and raged as if it had commission to devour every thing that was in its way. On the second of September, 1666, this dismal fire broke out at a baker's shop in Pudding-lane by Fish-street, in the lower part of the city, near Thames-street, (among rotten wooden houses ready to take fire, and full of combustible goods) in Billingsgate-ward; which ward in a few hours was laid in ashes. It began in the dead of the night, and the darkness very much increased the confusion and horror of

Vincent's Terrible Voice, p. 46.

the ſurprizing calamity: when it had made havock of ſome houſes, it ruſhed down the hill towards the bridge; croſſed Thames-ſtreet, invaded St. Magnus church at the bridge foot, and though that church was ſo great, yet it was not a ſufficient barricado againſt this mercileſs conqueror; but having ſcaled and taken this fort, it ſhot flames with ſo much the greater advantage into all places round about, and a great building of houſes upon the bridge is quickly thrown down to the ground; there, being ſtayed in its courſe at the bridge, the fire marched back through the city again, and ran along, with great noiſe and violence, through Thames-ſtreet weſtward, where having ſuch combuſtible matter to feed on, and ſuch a fierce wind upon its back, it prevailed with little reſiſtance, unto the aſtoniſhment of the beholders. The fire is ſoon taken notice of, though in the midſt of the night: *Fire! Fire! Fire!* doth reſound through the ſtreets; many ſtart out of their ſleep, look out of their windows; ſome dreſs themſelves, and run to the place. The citizens, affrighted and amazed, delayed the uſe of timely remedies; and what added to the misfortune, was, the people neglecting their houſes, and being ſo fatally ſet on the haſty removing of their goods, which were, notwithſtanding, devoured by the nimble increaſe of the flames. A raging eaſt-wind fomented it to an incredible degree, and in a

Terrible Voice, p. 48.

Echard's hiſt. Engl. vol. iii. 166.

moment raiſed the fire from the bottoms to the tops of the houſes, and ſcattered prodigious flakes in all places, which were mounted ſo vaſtly high in the air, as if heaven and earth were threatened with the ſame conflagration. The fury ſoon became inſuperable againſt the arts of men and power of engines; and beſide the diſmal ſcenes of flames, ruin, and deſolation, there appeared the moſt killing ſight in the diſtracted looks of the citizens, the wailings of miſerable women, the cries of poor children, and decrepid old people; with all the marks of confuſion and deſpair. No man that had the ſenſe of human miſeries could unconcernedly behold the diſmal ravage and deſtruction made in one of the nobleſt cities of the world.

The lord mayor of the city comes with his officers; what a confuſion there is!—counſel is taken away; and London, ſo famous for wiſdom and dexterity, can now find neither brains nor hands to prevent its ruin: the decree was gone forth, London muſt now fall: and who can prevent it? No wonder, when ſo many pillars are removed, the building tumbles. The fire gets the maſtery, and burns dreadfully, by the force of the wind; it ſpreads quickly; and goes on with ſuch force and rage, overturning all ſo furiouſly, that the whole city is brought into jeopardy and deſolation. Vincent, 48.

——Fire commiſſion'd by the winds,
Begins on ſheds, but, rowling in a round,
On palaces returns. DRYDEN.

Vincent, 49. That night moſt of the Londoners had taken their laſt ſleep in their houſes; they little thought it would be ſo when they went into their beds: they did not in the leaſt expect, that when the doors of their ears were unlocked, and the caſements of their eyes were opened, in the morning, to hear of ſuch an enemy invading the city, and that they ſhould ſee him with ſuch fury enter the doors of their houſes, break into every room, and look out at their windows with ſuch a threatning countenance.

That which made the ruin more diſmal was, that it began on the Lord's day morning; never was there the like ſabbath in London; ſome churches were in flames that day; God ſeemed to come down and preach himſelf in them, as he did in Sinai when the mount burned with fire; ſuch warm preaching thoſe churches never had: in other churches miniſters were preaching their farewell ſermons; and people were hearing with quaking and aſtoniſhment: inſtead of a holy reſt which chriſtians had taken that day, there was a tumultuous hurrying about the ſtreets toward the place that burned, and more tumultuous hurrying upon the ſpirits of thoſe that ſat ſtill, and had only the notice of the

the ear, of the ſtrange and quick ſpreading of the fire.

Now the trained bands are up in arms, watching at every quarter for outlandiſhmen, becauſe of the general fears and rumours that fire-balls were thrown into houſes by ſeveral of them, to help on and provoke the too furious flames. Now goods are moved haſtily from the lower parts of the city, and the body of the people begins to retire and draw upward. Yet ſome hopes were retained on the Sunday that the fire would be extinguiſhed, eſpecially by thoſe who lived in remote parts; they could ſcarce imagine that the fire a mile off could reach their houſes. All means to ſtop it proved ineffectual; the wind was ſo high, that flakes of fire and burning matter were carried acroſs ſeveral ſtreets, and ſpread the conflagration every where.

But the evening draws on, and now the fire is more viſible and dreadful; inſtead of the black curtains of the night which uſed to be ſpread over the city, now the curtains are yellow; the ſmoke that aroſe from the burning part ſeemed like ſo much flame, in the night, which being blown upon the other parts by the wind, the whole city, at ſome diſtance, ſeemed to be on fire. Now hopes begin to ſink, and a general conſternation ſeizeth upon the ſpirits of people: little ſleep is taken in London this night; ſome are at work to Vincent, 50.

quench the fire, others endeavour to ſtop its courſe, by pulling down houſes; but all to no purpoſe: if it be a little allayed, or put to a ſtand, in ſome places, it quickly recruits, and recovers its force: it leaps, and mounts, and makes the more furious onſet, drives back all oppoſers, ſnatches the weapons out of their hands, ſeizes upon the water-houſes and engines, and makes them unfit for ſervice. Some are upon their knees in the night, pouring out tears before the Lord, interceding for poor London in the day of its calamity; yet none can prevail to reverſe that doom, which is gone forth againſt the city, the fire hath received its commiſſion, and all attempts to hinder it are in vain.

Sunday night the fire had got as far as Garlick-hithe in Thames-ſtreet, and had crept up into Cannon-ſtreet, and levelled it with the ground, and ſtill is making forward by the water ſide, and upward to the brow of the hill on which the city was built.

On Monday Grace-church-ſtreet is all in flames, with Lombard-ſtreet on the left, and part of Fenchurch-ſtreet on the right, the fire working (though not ſo faſt) againſt the wind that way; before it, were pleaſant and ſtately houſes; behind it, ruinous and deſolate heaps. The burning then was in faſhion of a bow; a dreadful bow it was! ſuch as few eyes had ever ſeen before!

Now

Now the flames break in upon Cornhill, that large and ſpacious ſtreet, and quickly croſs the way by the train of wood that lay in the ſtreets untaken away which had been pulled down from houſes to prevent its ſpreading, and ſo they lick the whole ſtreets as they go; they mount up to the tops of the higheſt houſes, they deſcend down to the bottom of the loweſt cellars; they march along both ſides of the way, with ſuch a roaring noiſe as never was heard in the city of London; no ſtately buildings ſo great as to reſiſt their fury: the royal exchange itſelf, the glory of the merchants, is now invaded, and when once the fire was entered, how quickly did it run through the galleries, filling them with flames; then deſcending the ſtairs, compaſſeth the walks, giveth forth flaming vollies, and filleth the court with fire: by-and-by down fall all the kings upon their faces, and the greateſt part of the building upon them, (the founder's ſtatue only remaining) with ſuch a noiſe as was dreadful and aſtoniſhing.

September the third the exchange was burnt, and in three days almoſt all the city within the walls: the people having none to conduct them right, could do nothing to reſiſt it, but ſtand and ſee their houſes burn without remedy; the engines being preſently out of order and uſeleſs!

Then! then! the city did ſhake indeed! and the inhabitants did tremble! they flew away in great amazement from their houſes, leſt the flames ſhould devour them. Rattle! rattle! rattle! was the noiſe which the fire ſtruck upon the ear round about, as if there had been a thouſand iron chariots beating upon the ſtones; and if you turned your eyes to the opening of the ſtreets where the fire was come, you might ſee in ſome places whole ſtreets at once in flames, that iſſued forth as if they had been ſo many forges from the oppoſite windows, and which folding together, united into one great volume throughout the whole ſtreet; and then you might ſee the houſes tumble, tumble, tumble, from one end of the ſtreet to the other, with a great craſh! leaving the foundations open to the view of the heavens.

Conant, i. 456. Now fearfulneſs and terror doth ſurprize all the citizens of London; men were in a miſerable hurry, full of diſtraction and confuſions; they had not the command of their own thoughts, to reflect and enquire what was fit and proper to be done. It would have grieved the heart of an unconcerned perſon, to ſee the rueful looks, the pale cheeks, the tears trickling down from the eyes (where the greatneſs of ſorrow and amazement could give leave for ſuch a vent) the ſmiting of the breaſt, the wringing of the hands; to hear the ſighs and groans, the doleful and weeping

Vincent.

ing ſpeeches of the diſtreſſed citizens, when they were bringing forth their wives (ſome from their child-bed) and their little ones (ſome from their ſick beds) out of their houſes, and ſending them into the fields, with their goods.---Now the hope of London is gone; their heart is ſunk: now there is a general remove in the city, and that in a greater hurry than before the plague; their goods being in greater danger by the fire, than their perſons were by the peſtilence. Scarcely are ſome returned, but they muſt remove again; and not as before, now without any more hopes of ever returning and living in thoſe houſes any more. The ſtreets were crouded with people and carts, to carry what goods they could get out; they who were moſt active and had moſt money to pay carriage at exorbitant prices, ſaved much, the reſt loſt almoſt all. Carts, drays, coaches, and horſes, as many as could have entrance into the city, were laden, and any money is given for help; five, ten, twenty, thirty pounds for a cart, to bear forth to the fields ſome choice things which were ready to be conſumed; and ſome of the countrymen had the conſcience to accept the prices which the citizens did offer in their extremity. Now caſks of wine and oil, and other commodities, tumbled along, and the owners ſhove as much as they can toward the gates; every one becomes a porter to himſelf, and

ſcarcely

ſcarcely a back, either of man or woman, but had a burden on it in the ſtreets. It was very melancholy to ſee ſuch throngs of poor citizens coming in and going forth from the unburnt parts, heavy loaden, with pieces of their goods, but more heavy loaden with grief and ſorrow of heart; ſo that it is wonderful they did not quite ſink down under their burdens.

Monday night was a dreadful night! When the wings of the night had ſhadowed the light of the heavenly bodies, there was no darkneſs of night in London, for the fire ſhines now about with a fearful blaze, which yielded ſuch light in the ſtreets as it had been the ſun at noon day. The fire having wrought backward ſtrangely againſt the wind to Billingſgate, &c. along Thames-ſtreet eaſtward, runs up the hill to Tower-ſtreet; and having marched on from Grace-church-ſtreet, maketh farther progreſs in Fenchurch-ſteet; and having ſpread its rage beyond Queenhithe in Thames-ſtreet, weſtward, mounts up from the water-ſide through Dowgate and Old-fiſh-ſtreet into Watling-ſtreet; but the great fury was in the broader ſtreets; in the midſt of the night it came into Cornhill, and laid it in the duſt, and running along by the Stocks, there meets with another fire which came down Thread-needle-ſtreet, a little farther with another which came up Walbrook; a little further

with

with another which comes up Bucklerſbury; and all theſe four meeting together, break into one of the corners of Cheapſide, with ſuch a dazzling glare, burning heat, and roaring noiſe, by the falling of ſo many houſes together, that was very amazing! and though it was ſomewhat ſtopped in its ſwift courſe at Mercer's chapel, yet with great force in a while it burns through it, and then with great rage proceedeth forward in Cheapſide.

On Tueſday was the fire burning up the very bowels of London; Cheapſide is all in a light fire in a few hours time; many fires meeting there as in the center; from Soper-lane, Bow-lane, Bread-ſtreet, Friday-ſtreet, and Old-change, the fire comes up almoſt together, and breaks furiouſly into the broad ſtreet, and moſt of that ſide the way was together in flames: a dreadful ſpectacle! and then, partly by the fire which came down from Mercer's chapel, partly by the fall of the houſes croſs the way, the other ſide is quickly kindled, and doth not ſtand long after it.

Now the fire gets into Black-friars, and ſo continues its courſe by the water, and makes up toward St. Paul's church on that ſide, and Cheapſide fire beſets the great building on this ſide; and the church, though all of ſtone outward, though naked of houſes about it, and though ſo high above all buildings in the city, yet within a while doth yield

to the violent aſſaults of the all-conquering flames, and ſtrangely takes fire at the top: now the lead melts and runs down, as if it had been ſnow before the ſun; and the great beams and maſſy ſtones, with a hideous noiſe, fell on the pavement, and break through into Faith-church underneath; and great flakes of ſtone ſcale and peel off ſtrangely from the ſide of the walls: the conqueror having got this high fort, darts its flames round about; now Pater-noſter-row, Newgate-ſtreet, the Old-bailey, and Ludgate-hill, have ſubmitted themſelves to the devouring fire, which, with wonderful ſpeed ruſh down the hill, into Fleet-ſtreet. Now Cheapſide fire marcheth along Ironmonger-lane, Old-jury, Laurence-lane, Milk-ſtreet, Wood-ſtreet, Gutter-lane, Foſter-lane; now it comes along Lothbury, Cateaton-ſtreet, &c. From Newgate-ſtreet it aſſaults Chriſt-church, conquers that great building, and burns through St. Martins-le-grand toward Alderſgate; and all ſo furiouſly as it would not leave a houſe ſtanding.

Terrible flakes of fire mount up to the ſky, and the yellow ſmoak of London aſcendeth up towards heaven like the ſmoak of a great furnace; a ſmoak ſo great as darkeneth the ſun at noon-day; if at any time the ſun peeped forth it looked red like blood: the cloud of ſmoak was ſo great, that travellers did ride at noon-day ſome miles together in the

the ſhadow thereof, though there was no other cloud beſide to be ſeen in the ſky.

If Monday night was dreadful, Tueſday night was much more ſo, when far the greateſt part of the city was conſumed: many thouſands who on Saturday had houſes convenient in the city, both for themſelves and to entertain others, have not where to lay their heads; and the fields are the only receptacle they can find for themſelves and their few remaining goods: moſt of the late inhabitants lie all night in the open air, with no other canopy over them but that of the heavens. The fire is ſtill making toward them, and threatning the ſuburbs. It was amazing to ſee how it had ſpread itſelf ſeveral miles in compaſs: among other things that night, the ſight of Guildhall was a fearful ſpectacle, which ſtood the whole body of it together in view, for ſeveral hours after the fire had taken it, without flames (poſſibly becauſe the timber was ſuch ſolid oak) in a bright ſhining coal, as if it had been a palace of gold, or a great building of burniſhed braſs.

On Wedneſday morning, when people expected the ſuburbs would be burnt as well as the city, and with ſpeed were preparing their flight, as well as they could with their luggage, into the countries and neighbouring villages; then the Lord had pity upon poor London: the wind is huſhed; the commiſſion of the fire is withdrawing, and

it burns ſo gently, even when it meets with no oppoſition, that it was not hard to be quenched, in many places, with a few hands; an angel came which had power over fire. The citizens begin to gather a little heart and encouragement in their endeavours to quench the fire. A check it had at Leaden-hall by that great building; it had a ſtop in Biſhopſgate-ſtreet, Fenchurch-ſtreet, Lime-ſtreet, Mark-lane, and toward the Tower: one means (under God) was the blowing up houſes with gun-powder. It is ſtayed in Lothbury, Broad-ſtreet, and Coleman-ſtreet; toward the gates it burnt, but not with any great violence; at the Temple alſo it ſtaid, and in Holborn, where it had got no great footing; and when once the fire was got under, it was kept under: and on Thurſday the flames were extinguiſhed.

Rev. xiv. 18.

Few could take much ſleep for divers nights together, when the fire was burning in the ſtreets, and burning down the houſes, leſt their perſons ſhould have been conſumed with their ſubſtance and habitations. But on Wedneſday night, when the people late of London, now of the fields, hoped to get a little reſt on the ground where they had ſpread their beds, a more dreadful fear falls upon them than they had before, through a rumour that the French were coming armed againſt them to cut their throats, and ſpoil them of what they had ſaved out of the fire: they were

were now naked, weak, and in ill condition to defend themſelves; and the hearts, eſpecially of the females, do quake and tremble, and are ready to die within them; yet many citizens having loſt their houſes, and almoſt all they had, are fired with rage and fury; and they began to ſtir up themſelves like lions, or bears bereaved of their whelps: Now, arm! arm! arm! doth reſound through the fields and ſuburbs with a great noiſe. We may gueſs the diſtreſs and perplexity of the people this night; but it was ſomewhat alleviated when the falſeneſs of the alarm was diſcovered.

Thus fell great London, that ancient and populous city! London! which was the queen city of the land; and as famous as moſt cities in the world! and yet how is London departed like ſmoak, and her glory laid in the duſt! How is her deſtruction come, which no man thought of, and her deſolation in a moment! How do the nations about gaze and wonder! How doth the whole land tremble at her fall! How do her citizens droop and hang down their heads, her women and virgins weep, and ſit in the duſt! Oh! the paleneſs that now ſits upon the cheeks! the aſtoniſhment and confuſion that covers the face, the diſmal apprehenſions that ariſe in the minds of moſt, concerning the dreadful conſequences which are likely to be of this fall of London! How is the

the pride of London ſtained, her beauty ſpoiled; her arm broken, and her ſtrength departed! her riches almoſt gone, and her treaſures ſo much conſumed!——every one is ſenſible of the ſtroke.——Never was England in greater danger of being made a prey to a foreign power, than after the firing and fall of the city, which had the ſtrength and treaſure of the nation in it. How is London ceaſed, that rich, that joyous city! One corner indeed is left; but more than as many houſes as were within the walls, are turned into aſhes.

See Bp. Beveridge's ſerm. on Sept. 2.

The merchants now have left the Royal Exchange; the buyers and ſellers have now forſaken the ſtreets: Grace-church-ſtreet, Cornhill, Cheapſide, Newgate-market, and the like places, which uſed to have throngs of traffickers, now are become empty of inhabitants; and inſtead of the ſtately houſes which ſtood there laſt ſummer, they lie this winter in ruinous heaps. The glory of London is fled away like a bird; the trade of London is ſhattered and broken to pieces: her delights alſo are vaniſhed, and pleaſant things laid waſte: now there is no chaunting to the ſound of the viol, nor dancing to the ſweet muſic of inſtruments; no drinking wine in bowls, and ſtretching upon beds of luſt; no exceſs of wine and banqueting; no feaſts in halls, no amorous looks and wanton dalliances; no ruſtling ſilks and coſtly dreſſes; theſe things at that place are

at

at an end. The houſes for God's worſhip (which formerly were bulwarks againſt fire, partly through the walls about them, partly through the fervent prayers within them) now are devoured by the flames; the habitations of many who truly feared God have not eſcaped: the fire makes no diſcrimination between the houſes of the godly and the houſes of the ungodly; they are all made of the ſame combuſtible matter, and are kindled, as bodies are infected, by one another.

London was laid in aſhes, and made a ruinous heap: it was a by-word and a proverb, a gazing ſtock and an hiſſing and aſtoniſhment to all that paſſed by; it cauſed the ears of all to tingle that heard the rumour and report of what the righteous hand of God had brought upon her. A mighty city turned into aſhes and rubbiſh, comparatively in a few hours; made a place fit for Zim and Okim to take up their abode in; the mercileſs element where it raged ſcarcely leaving a lintel for a cormorant or bittern to lodge in, or the remainder of a ſcorched window to ſing in. A ſad and terrible face was there in the ruinous parts of London: in the places where God had been ſerved, nettles growing, owls ſcreeking, thieves and cut-throats lurking. The voice of the Lord hath been crying, yea, roaring, in the city, of the dreadful judgments of plague and fire.

Conant i. 459, 479.

Vincent.

Bedloe's narrative, epiſt. ded.

There was ſuddenly and unexpectedly ſeen, a glorious city laid waſte; the habitations turned into rubbiſh; eſtates deſtroyed; the produce and incomes of many years hard labour and careful induſtry all in a few moments ſwept away and conſumed by devouring flames.—To have ſeen dear relations, faithful ſervants, even yourſelves and families, reduced from plentiful, affluent, comfortable trade and fortune, over-night, to the extremeſt miſery next morning! without an houſe to ſhelter, goods to accommodate, or ſettled courſe of trade to ſupport. Many forced, in old age, to begin the world a-new; and expoſed to all the hardſhips and inconveniencies of want and poverty.

Neh. ii. 3.

Should not my countenance be ſad, when the city, the place of my father's ſepulchre, lieth waſte, and the gates thereof are conſumed with fire?

Burnet abridged, 135. Oldm. i. 529.

While the terrors occaſioned by the conflagration remained in the minds of men, many eminent, learned, pious divines of the church of England were more than ordinary diligent in the diſcharge of their holy function in this calamitous time; and many miniſters who had not conformed, preached in the midſt of the burning ruins, to a willing and attentive people: conventicles abounded in every part; it was thought hard to hinder men from worſhipping God in any way they could, when there were no churches, nor miniſters

to

to look after them. Tabernacles, with all poſſible expedition, were every where raiſed for public worſhip till churches could be built. Among the eſtabliſhed clergy were Dr. Tillotſon, Dr. Stillingfleet, Dr. Whitcot, Dr. Horton, Dr. Patrick, Mr. White, Dr. Outram, Mr. Giffard, Mr. Neſt, Mr. Meriton, and many others: divines of equal merit and moderation, ornaments of their ſacred profeſſion and the eſtabliſhed church. Among the preſbyterians were Dr. Manton, Mr. Thomas Vincent, Mr. Wadſworth, Mr. Janeway, Mr. Thomas Doolittle, Mr. Anneſley, Mr. Cheſter, Mr. Franklin, Mr. Grimes, Mr. Watſon, Dr. Jacomb, Mr. Nathanael Vincent, Mr. Turner, Mr. Griffiths, Mr. Brooks, Dr. Owen, Mr. Nye, Mr. Caryl, Dr. Goodwin, Mr. Barker.

The loſs in goods and houſes is ſcarcely to be valued, or even conceived. The loſs of books was an exceeding great detriment, not to the owners only, but to learning in general. The library at Sion-college, and moſt private libraries in London, were burnt.

The fire of London moſt of all endamaged the company of printers and ſtationers, moſt of whoſe habitations, ſtorehouſes, ſhops, ſtocks, and books, were not only conſumed, but their aſhes and ſcorched leaves conveyed aloft, and diſperſed by the winds to places above ſixteen miles diſtant, to the great admiration of beholders!

Seymour's Survey, i. 70.

Notwithſtanding the great loſſes by the fire, the devouring peſtilence in the city the year preceding, and the chargeable war with the Dutch at that time depending; yet by the king's grace, the wiſdom of the parliament then ſitting at Weſtminſter, the diligence and activity of the lord mayor aldermen and commoners of the city (who were likewiſe themſelves the moſt conſiderable loſers by the fatal accident) it was in the ſpace of four or five years well nigh rebuilt. Divers churches, the ſtately Guildhall, many halls of companies, and other public edifices; all infinitely more uniform, more ſolid and more magnificent than before; ſo that no city in Europe (ſcarcely in the univerſe) can ſtand in competition with it in many particulars.

The fire of London ending at the eaſt end of Tower-ſtreet, the extent of which came juſt to the dock on the weſt ſide of the Tower, there was nothing between the Tower walls and it but the breadth of the dock, and a great many old timber houſes which were built upon the banks of the dock, and in the outward bulwark of the Tower and Tower-ditch (which then was very foul) to the very wall of the Tower itſelf. Which old houſes if the fire had taken hold of, the Tower itſelf, and all the buildings within it, had in all probability been deſtroyed. But ſuch was the lieutenant's care of the great

charge committed to him, that to prevent future damage, a few weeks after he cauſed all theſe old houſes which ſtood between the Tower dock and the Tower wall to be pulled down; and not only them, but all thoſe which were built upon or near the Tower ditch, from the bulwark gate along both the tower-hills, and ſo to the Iron-gate; and cauſed ſtrong rails of oak to be ſet up upon the wharf where thoſe houſes ſtood, which were about four hundred: ſo that by theſe means, not only the White-tower but the whole outward Tower wall and the ditch round about the ſame, are all viſible to paſſengers, and afford a very fine proſpect.

During the whole continuance of this unparalleled calamity, the king himſelf, rouſed from his pleaſures, commiſerated the care of the diſtreſſed, and acted like the true father of his people. In a manuſcript from the ſecretary's office we find theſe words, "All "own the immediate hand of God, and bleſs "the goodneſs and tender care of the king, "who made the round of the fire uſually "twice every day, and, for many hours to-"gether, on horſeback and on foot; gave "orders for purſuing the work, by com-"mands, threatnings, deſires, example, and "good ſtore of money, which he himſelf "diſtributed to the workers, out of an hun-"dred pound bag which he carried with him "for that purpoſe." At the ſame time his

Echard hiſt. Engl. iii. 166.

royal highneſs the duke of York alſo, and many of the nobility, were as diligent as poſſible; they commended and encouraged the forward, aſſiſted the miſerable ſufferers, and gave a moſt generous example to all, by the vigorous oppoſition they made againſt the devouring flames.

Burnet abridged, p. 120.

The king and the duke, with the guards, were almoſt all the day on horſeback, ſeeing to all that could be done, either for quenching the fire, or for carrying off perſons or goods to the fields. The king was never obſerved to be ſo much ſtruck with any thing in his whole life.

Collier's Dict. James.

In the dreadful fire of London, the king and the duke did their utmoſt in perſon to extinguiſh it; and after it had been once maſtered, and broke out again in the Temple, the duke watching there all night, put n effectual ſtop to it by blowing up houſes.

Echard, iii. 166.

Afterward, when the multitudes of poor people were forced to lodge in the fields, or croud themſelves into poor huts and booths built with deal boards, his majeſty was frequent in conſulting all ways to relieve theſe wretches, as well by proclamations, as by his orders to the juſtices of peace, to ſend proviſions into Moorfields and other places; and moreover, he ſent them out of the Tower the warlike proviſions which were there depoſited for the ſeamen and ſoldiers, to keep them from ſtarving in this extremity.

At

At the ſame time he proclaimed a faſt throughout England and Wales; and ordered that the diſtreſſed condition of the ſufferers ſhould be recommended to the charity of all well-diſpoſed perſons, upon that day, to be afterwards diſtributed by the hands of the lord mayor of London. Laſtly, to ſhew his ſpecial care for the city's reſtoration, in council, wherein he firſt prohibited the haſty building any houſes till care ſhould be taken for its re-edification, ſo as might beſt ſecure it from the like fatal accident; for the encouragement of others, he promiſed to rebuild his Cuſtom-houſe, and to enlarge it, for the benefit of the merchants and trade; which he performed at his own particular charge, and at the expence of ten thouſand pounds.

At the news of the fire of London all the good ſubjects of Ireland were ſeized with the utmoſt conſternation upon that deplorable accident. In compaſſion to the ſufferers the lord lieutenant (the duke of Ormond) ſet on foot a ſubſcription for their relief, which roſe to a higher value than could be expected in ſo diſtreſſed a country, where there was not money to circulate for the common neceſſities of the people, or to pay the public taxes: therefore the ſubſcription was made in beeves, thirty thouſand of which were ſent to London. Carte Ormd. i. 329.

Extract from the ſpeech of ſir Edward Turner, ſpeaker of the honourable houſe of commons, at the prorogation of the parliament, February, 8, 1667.

We muſt for ever with humility acknowledge the juſtice of God in puniſhing the whole nation in the late conflagration in London: we know they were not the greateſt ſinners on whom the tower of Siloam fell; and doubtleſs all our ſins did contribute to the filling up that meaſure, which being full, drew down the wrath of God upon that city: but it very much reviveth us to behold the miraculous bleſſing of God upon your majeſty's endeavours for the preſervation of that part of the city which is left. We hope God will direct your royal heart and this fortunate iſland in a few days to lay a foundation-ſtone in the re-building of that royal city; the beauty and praiſe whereof ſhall fill the whole earth. For the encouragement of this noble work we have prepared ſeveral bills; one for the eſtabliſhing a judicatory for the ſpeedy determining all actions and cauſes of action that may ariſe between landlords and tenants upon this ſad accident. Though I perſuade myſelf no Engliſhman would be exempted from making ſome offering to carry on the pious undertaking, yet the exemplary charity of your majeſty's twelve reverend judges is fit with honour to be mentioned before your majeſty: they are willing

to

to ſpend all their ſand that doth not run out in your majeſty's immediate ſervice, in diſpenſing juſtice in their ſeveral courts to your people, in hearing and determining the controverſies that may ariſe upon old agreements, and making new rules between owners and tenants, for their mutual agreement in this glorious action. We have likewiſe prepared a bill for the regularity of the new buildings, that they may be raiſed with more conveniency, beauty, and ſecurity, than they had before: ſome ſtreets we have ordered to be opened and enlarged, and many obſtructions to be removed; but all with your majeſty's approbation. This, we conceive, cannot be done with juſtice, unleſs a compenſation be given to thoſe that ſhall be loſers; we have therefore laid an impoſition of twelve pence upon every chaldron and every tun of coals that ſhall be brought into the port of London for ten years, the better to enable the lord mayor and aldermen to recompence thoſe perſons whoſe ground ſhall be taken from them.

Rome was not built in a day: nor can we in the cloſe of this ſeſſion finiſh the rules for the dividing the pariſhes, rebuilding of the churches, and the ornamental parts of the city, that we intended; theſe things muſt reſt till another ſeſſion: but we know your majeſty in the mean time will take them into your princely conſideration, and make it

your

your care that the houſes of God, and your royal chamber, be decently and conveniently reſtored.

Echard, Hiſt. Eng. iii. 177, 178.

The fire of London had exerciſed the wits and inventions of many heads, and eſpecially put ſeveral ingenious perſons on contriving and ſetting up offices for inſuring of houſes from fire; ſince which many of thoſe offices are framed.

All perſons were indefatigably induſtrious in the great work of rebuilding; and when all proviſions were made for the city's reſurrection, the famous Sir Jonas Moore firſt of all produced the beautiful Fleet-ſtreet, according to the appointed model; and from that beginning the city grew ſo haſtily toward a general perfection, that within the compaſs of a few years it far tranſcended its former ſplendor.

In the mean time Greſham college was converted into an exchange; and in the apartments the public buſineſs of the city was tranſacted inſtead of Guildhall.

Echard. Gazette, Pref. ſtate. Seymour.

To the ſame place alderman Backwell, a noted banker, removed from Lombard-ſtreet, alderman Meynell, and divers other bankers of Lombard-ſtreet, were preſerved in their eſtates, and ſettled in and about Broad-ſtreet.

The royal ſociety being driven out from Greſham college, Henry Howard, brother to the duke of Norfolk, late earl marſhal of England, invited that noble body to hold

their meetings at Arundel-houſe, where he aſſigned them very convenient rooms; and on new-year's day, being himſelf a member of that ſociety, he very generouſly preſented them and their ſucceſſors with a fair library of books, being the whole Norfolkian library, with permiſſion of changing ſuch books as were not proper for their collection.

Sir Robert Viner, a very great banker, providentially removed all his concerns twenty-four hours before the furious fire entered Lombard-ſtreet; and ſettled in the African houſe, which was then kept near the middle of Broad-ſtreet; till ſuch time as he built that noble ſtructure in Lombard-ſtreet now uſed for the general poſt-office, which was purchaſed by king Charles the ſecond for that purpoſe. The neatly wrought conduit in the Stocks market-place at the weſt end of Lombard-ſtreet (the ſpot on which the lord-mayor's manſion houſe is ſince erected) whereon was placed a large ſtatue of king Charles the ſecond on horſe-back, trampling upon an enemy, was ſet up at the ſole coſt and charges of that worthy citizen and alderman, Sir Robert Viner, knight and baronet †.

The

† Of this clumſy piece of ſculpture we have the following account from an ingenious author.——It is impoſſible to quit this place without taking notice of the equeſtrian ſtatue raiſed here in honour of Charles II. a thing in itſelf ſo exceedingly ridiculous and abſurd, Maitland's Survey, p. 1049.

The exciſe-office was kept in Southampton-fields, near Southampton (now Bedford) houſe.

The general poſt-office was moved to the two Black Pillars in Bridges-ſtreet, Covent-garden.

The affairs of the cuſtom-houſe were tranſacted in Mark-lane, at a houſe called Lord Bayning's: till the cuſtom-houſe was rebuilt in a much more magnificent, uniform and commodious manner, by king Charles the ſecond, which coſt him ten thouſand pounds.

The office for hearth-money was kept near Billeter-lane in Leadenhall-ſtreet.

The king's great wardrobe, together with the fair dwelling houſes of the maſter and officers, near Puddle-wharf, being conſumed, that office has ſince been kept in York-houſe-buildings.

ſurd, that it is in no one's power to look upon it without reflecting on the taſtes of thoſe who ſet it up. But when we enquire into the hiſtory of it, the farce improves upon our hands, and what was before contemptible, grows entertaining. This ſtatue was originally made for John Sobieſki king of Poland, but by ſome accident was left upon the workman's hands. About the ſame time the city was loyal enough to pay their devoirs to king Charles immediately upon his reſtoration; and finding this ſtatue ready made to their hands, reſolved to do it in the cheapeſt way, and convert the Polander into a Briton, and the Turk underneath, into Oliver Cromwell, to make their compliment compleat: and the turban upon the laſt mentioned figure, is an undeniable proof of the truth of the ſtory.

The

The buildings of Doctors Commons in the pariſh of St. Bennet Paul's wharf, near St. Paul's, being entirely conſumed by the dreadful fire, their offices were held at Exeter-houſe in the Strand until the year 1672, when they returned to their former place, rebuilt in a very ſplendid and convenient manner, at the proper coſt and charges of the ſaid doctors.

The college of phyſicians had purchaſed a houſe and ground at the end of Amen-ſtreet, whereon the famous Dr. Harvey, at his proper charge, did erect a magnificent ſtructure, both for a library, and a public hall; this goodly edifice could not eſcape the fury of the dreadful fire; and the ground being but a leaſehold, the fellows purchaſed a fair piece of ground in Warwick-lane, whereon they have erected a very magnificent edifice: with a noble apartment for the containing an excellent library, given them partly by the marquis of Dorcheſter, but chiefly by that eminent profeſſor ſir Theodore Mayerne, knight.

The former burſe (or Royal Exchange) began to be erected in the year 1566, juſt one hundred years before it was burnt, at the coſt and charge of that noble merchant ſir Thomas Greſham: it was built of brick, and yet was the moſt ſplendid burſe then in Europe.

It is now rebuilt within and without of excellent ſtone, with ſuch curious and admirable architecture, eſpecially for a front, a high turret or ſteeple, wherein are an harmonious chime of twelve bells, and for arch-work, that it ſurpaſſes all other burſes. It is built quadrangular, with a large court wherein the merchants may aſſemble, and the greateſt part, in caſe of rain or hot ſunſhine, may be ſheltered in ſide galleries or porticoes. The whole fabric coſt fifty thouſand pounds; whereof one half was diſburſed by the chamber of London, or corporation of the city, and the other half by the company of mercers.

Before the dreadful fire, there were all around the quadrangle of this royal exchange the ſtatues of the ſovereign princes ſince what was called the Norman conqueſt, and by the care and coſt of the city companies moſt of thoſe niches were again filled with the like curious ſtatues, in marble or alabaſter.

St. Paul's cathedral was new building at the time of the fire, the ſtone-work almoſt finiſhed: but it is now rebuilt with greater ſolidity, magnificence and ſplendor, by the moſt renowned architect ſir Chriſtopher Wren.

Not far from the college of Doctors-Commons ſtood the College of Heralds, in an ancient houſe called Derby-houſe, being built by Thomas Stanly earl of Derby, who married Margaret counteſs of Richmond,

mother

mother of king Henry the ſeventh: where their records were preſerved.—This college was burnt down, but the books and records were preſerved, and placed, by the king's appointment, at the lower end of the Court of Requeſts.

Since the late dreadful fire this college has been handſomely rebuilt, upon St. Bennet's hill, near Doctors-Commons, where their library is now kept.

The houſe of St. Bartholomew's hoſpital eſcaped the fury of the great fire, but moſt of the eſtates belonging to it were conſumed.

The companies halls were rebuilt, all at the charges of each fraternity, with great magnificence; being ſo many noble ſtructures or palaces, with gallant frontiſpieces, ſtately courts, ſpacious rooms; the halls eſpecially, from which the whole are named, are not only ample enough to feaſt all the livery in each company, ſome to the number of three or four hundred; but many of them are fit to receive a crowned head with all its nobles, thoſe of each of the twelve companies eſpecially. The company of mercers, beſide their hall, have a ſumptuous and ſpacious chapel for divine ſervice.

Thoſe city gates which were burnt down, as Ludgate and Newgate, were rebuilt with great ſolidity and magnificence.

The attempt to make Fleet-brook or ditch navigable to Holborn-bridge, was a mighty

mighty chargeable and beautiful work: and though it did not fully anſwer the deſigned purpoſe, it was remarkable for the curious ſtone bridges over it, and the many huge vaults on each ſide thereof, to treaſure up Newcaſtle coals for the uſe of the poor.

The whole damage ſuſtained by the fire is almoſt inconceivable and incredible; but the following method of computation hath been taken, to form ſome ſort of groſs eſtimate; and at the time was accounted very moderate:

Thirteen thouſand two hundred houſes one with another at twenty-five pounds rent at the low rate of twelve years purchaſe,	3,960,000
* Eighty-ſeven pariſh churches, at eight thouſand pounds each.	696,000
Six conſecrated chapels, at two thouſand pounds each,	12,000
The Royal Exchange, - - -	50,000
The Cuſtom-houſe, - - - -	10,000
Fifty-two halls of companies, moſt of which were magnificent ſtructures and palaces, at fifteen hundred pounds each,	78,000
Three city gates at three thouſand pounds each,	9,000

* The certificate ſays, eighty-nine pariſh churches: but ſee the act of parliament and inſcription on the Monument.

Jail

Jail of Newgate,	15,000
Four ſtone bridges,	6,000
Seſſions-houſe,	7,000
Guildhall, with the courts and offices belonging to it,	40,000
Blackwell-hall,	3,000
Bridewell,	5,000
Poultry Compter,	5,000
Woodſtreet Compter,	3,000
Toward rebuilding St. Paul's church, which at that time was new building, the ſtone-work being almoſt finiſhed,	2,000,000
Wares, houſhold-ſtuff, monies and moveable goods loſt and ſpoiled,	2,000,000
Hire of porters, carts, waggons, barges, boats, &c. for removing wares, houſhold-ſtuff, &c. during the fire, and ſome ſmall time after,	200,000
Printed books and paper in ſhops and warehouſes,	150,000
Wine, tobacco, ſugar, plumbs, &c. of which the city was at that time very full,	1,500,000
Cutting a navigable river to Holborn-bridge,	27,000
The Monument,	14,500
	L. 10,730,500

Beſide melioration-money paid to ſeveral proprietors who had their ground taken away, for the making of wharfs, enlarging the old, or making new ſtreets, market-places, &c.

Oldm. Hiſt. Engl. i. 529. See p. 34. (a).

The fire ſpread itſelf, beſide breadth, from almoſt Tower-hill, to St. Dunſtan's church in Fleet-ſtreet. After it had burnt almoſt three days and three nights, ſome ſeamen taught the people to blow up ſome of the next houſes with gunpowder; which ſtopped the fire: ſo that, (contrary to the inſcription on the Monument) there were human counſels in the ſtopping of the fire. It ſtopped at Holborn-bridge; at St. Sepulchre's church, when the church was burnt; in Aldgate, and Cripplegate, and other places on the wall; in Auſtin friars, the Dutch church ſtopped it, and eſcaped. It ſtopped in Biſhopſgate-ſtreet, in Leaden-hall-ſtreet, in the midſt of Fenchurch-ſtreet, and near the Tower. Alderman Jefferies loſt tobacco to the value of twenty thouſand pounds.

Extract from the certificate of the ſurveyors appointed to ſurvey the ruins.

The fire began September the ſecond, 1666, at Mr. Farryner's, a baker, in Pudding-lane, between one and two in the morning, and continued burning till the ſixth; did over-run three hundred ſeventy-three acres

acres within the walls: Eighty-nine pariſh churches, beſide chapels, burnt: eleven pariſhes within the walls ſtanding. Houſes burnt, thirteen thouſand and two hundred.

JONAS MOORE, } Surveyors.
RALPH GATRIX, }

The ſuperſtition and zeal of thoſe times made canonization much cheaper in a proteſtant than a popiſh church: a vehement preacher was a chief ſaint among the godly, and a few warm expreſſions were eſteemed little leſs than prophecies.

In the dedication to the rev. Mr. Reeves's ſermon preached 1655, are the following queries.

Can ſin and the city's ſafety, can impenitency and impunity ſtand long together? Fear you not ſome plague? Some coal blown with the breath of the Almighty, that may ſparkle, and kindle, and burn you to ſuch cinders, that not a wall or pillar may be left to teſtify the remembrance of a city?

The ſame gentleman ſays,—Your looking-glaſſes will be ſnatched away, your mirrors cracked, your diamonds ſhivered in pieces; this goodly city all in ſhreds; ye may ſeek for a pillar or threſhold of your ancient dwellings, but not find one: all your ſpacious manſions and ſumptuous monuments are then gone; not a porch, pavement, ceiling, ſtair-caſe, turret, lantern, bench, ſcreen, pane of a window, poſt, nail, ſtone, or duſt

London's Rememb. P. 33. ten years before the fire.

of your former houſes to be ſeen. No! with wringing hands you may aſk, where are thoſe ſweet places where we traded, feaſted, ſlept? where we lived like maſters, and ſhone like morning-ſtars? No! the houſes are fallen, and the houſeholders dropt with them: we have nothing but naked ſtreets, naked fields for ſhelters; not ſo much as a chamber to couch down our children, or repoſe our own members, when we are ſpent, or afflicted with ſickneſs. Wo unto us! our ſins have pulled down our houſes, ſhaken down our city; we are the moſt harbourleſs people in the world; like foreigners rather than natives; yea, rather like beaſts than men: foxes have holes and fowls have neſts, but we have neither holes nor neſts; our ſins have deprived us of couch and covert: we ſhould be glad if an hoſpital would receive us, dens or caves ſhelter us: the bleak air and cold ground are our only ſhades and refuges. But, alas! this is but the miſery of the ſtone-work, of arches, roofs, &c.

The following paragraph is taken from
p. 27, 28. Mr. Roſewell's cauſes and cures of the peſtilence, printed at London in the year of the great plague, 1665, a year before the fire of London.

Is it not of the Lord that the people ſhall labour in the very fire! and weary themſelves for vanity! It is of the Lord, ſurely! It comes to paſs by the ſecret counſel of God, that

that theſe houſes and cities which they build, ſhall either come to be conſumed by fire: or elſe, the people ſhall weary themſelves in vain; for vanity; to no purpoſe; ſeeing it comes ſo ſoon to be deſtroyed and ruinated, what they build.

SECT. II.

Account of the fire of London, publiſhed by authority, from the London Gazette.

Sept. 2. About two o'clock this morning a ſudden and lamentable fire broke out in this city, beginning not far from Thames-ſtreet, near London-bridge; which continues ſtill with great violence, and hath already burnt down to the ground many houſes thereabouts: which ſaid accident affected his majeſty with that tenderneſs and compaſſion, that he was pleaſed to go himſelf in perſon, with his royal highneſs, to give orders that all poſſible means ſhould be uſed for quenching the fire, or ſtopping its further ſpreading. In which care, the right honourable the earl of Craven was ſent by his majeſty, to be more particularly aſſiſting to the lord mayor and magiſtrates; and ſeveral companies of his guards ſent into the city, to be helpful in what means they could in ſo great a calamity.

Whitehall, Sept. 8. The ordinary courſe of this paper being interrupted by a ſad and lament-

lamentable accident of fire lately happened in the city of London; it hath been thought fit to ſatisfy the minds of ſo many of his majeſty's good ſubjects who muſt needs be concerned for the iſſue of ſo great an accident, to give this ſhort, but true, account of it.

On the 2d inſtant at one o'clock in the morning there happened to break out a ſad and deplorable fire in Pudding-lane near New-Fiſh-ſtreet, which falling out at that hour of the night, and in a quarter of the town ſo cloſe built with wooden pitched houſes, ſpread itſelf ſo far before day, and with ſuch diſtraction to the inhabitants and neighbours, that care was not taken for the timely preventing the further diffuſion of it, by pulling down houſes, as ought to have been; ſo that the lamentable fire in a ſhort time became too big to be maſtered by any engines, or working near it. It fell out moſt unhappily too, that a violent eaſterly wind fomented it, and kept it burning all that day, and the night following, ſpreading itſelf up to Gracechurch-ſtreet, and downward from Cannon-ſtreet to the water ſide as far as the Three Cranes in the Vintry.

The people in all parts about it were diſtracted by the vaſtneſs of it, and their particular care was to carry away their goods: many attempts were made to prevent the ſpreading of it by pulling down houſes, and making

making great intervals, but all in vain, the fire ſeizing upon the timber and rubbiſh, and ſo continuing itſelf, even through thoſe places, and raging in a bright flame all Monday and Tueſday, notwithſtanding his majeſty's own, and his royal highneſs's indefatigable and perſonal pains to apply all poſſible means to prevent it; calling upon and helping the people with their guards, and a great number of nobility and gentry unweariedly aſſiſting therein, for which they were requited with a thouſand bleſſings from the poor diſtreſſed people. By the favour of God the wind ſlacked a little on Tueſday night, and the flames meeting with brick buildings at the Temple, by little and little it was obſerved to loſe its force on that ſide, ſo that on Wedneſday morning we began to hope well, and his royal highneſs never departing nor ſlackening his perſonal care, wrought ſo well that day, aſſiſted in ſome parts by the lords of the council before and behind it, that a ſtop was put to it at the Temple church; near Holborn-bridge; Pye-corner; Alderſgate; Cripplegate; near the lower end of Coleman-ſtreet; at the end of Baſinghall ſtreet; by the Poſtern at the upper end of Biſhopſgate-ſtreet; and Leadenhall-ſtreet; at the ſtandard in Cornhill; at the church in Fenchurch-ſtreet; near Clothworkers hall in Mincing-lane; in the middle of Mark-lane; and at the tower-dock.

On Thurſday, by the bleſſing of God, it was wholly beat down and extinguiſhed. But ſo as that evening it burſt out afreſh at the Temple, by the falling of ſome ſparks (as is ſuppoſed) upon a pile of wooden buildings; but his royal highneſs, who watched there the whole night in perſon, by the great labour and diligence uſed, and eſpecially by applying powder to blow up the houſes about it, before day happily maſtered it.

Divers ſtrangers, Dutch and French, were, during the fire, apprehended, upon ſuſpicion that they contributed maliciouſly to it, who are all impriſoned, and informations prepared to make ſevere inquiſition hereupon by my lord chief juſtice Keeling, aſſiſted by ſome of the lords of the privy-council, and ſome principal members of the city: notwithſtanding which ſuſpicions, the manner of the burning all along in a train, and ſo blown forward in all its ways by ſtrong winds, makes us conclude the whole was an effect of an unhappy chance, or to ſpeak better, the heavy hand of God upon us, for our ſins, ſhewing us the terror of his judgment, in thus raiſing the fire, and immediately after his miraculous and never enough to be acknowledged mercy, in putting a ſtop to it when we were in the laſt deſpair, and that all attempts for the quenching it, however induſtriouſly purſued, ſeemed inſufficient. His majeſty then ſat hourly in council, and

ever ſince hath continued making rounds about the city, in all parts of it where the danger and miſchief was greateſt, till this morning that he hath ſent his grace the duke of Albemarle, whom he hath called for to aſſiſt him in this great occaſion; to put his happy and ſucceſsful hand to the finiſhing this memorable deliverance.

About the Tower, the ſeaſonable orders given for pulling down houſes to ſecure the magazines of powder, was moſt eſpecially ſucceſsful, that part being up the wind, notwithſtanding which, it came almoſt to the very gates of it, ſo as by the early proviſion, the ſeveral ſtores of war lodged in the Tower were entirely ſaved; and we have hitherto this infinite cauſe particularly to give God thanks, that the fire did not happen in any of thoſe places where his majeſty's naval ſtores are kept; ſo as though it hath pleaſed God to viſit us with his own hand, he hath not, by diſfurniſhing us with the means of carrying on the war, ſubjected us to our enemies.

It muſt be obſerved, that this fire happened at a part of the town, where, though the commodities were not very rich, yet they were ſo bulky that they could not be removed, ſo that the inhabitants of that part where it firſt began have ſuſtained very great loſs; but by the beſt inquiry we can make, the other parts of the town, where the com-

modities were of greater value, took the alarm ſo early, that they ſaved moſt of their goods of value, which poſſibly may have diminiſhed the loſs; though ſome think, that if the whole induſtry of the inhabitants had been applied to the ſtopping of the fire, and not to the ſaving their particular goods, the ſucceſs might have been much better, not only to the public, but to many of them in their own particulars.

Through this ſad accident it is eaſy to be imagined how many perſons were neceſſitated to remove themſelves and goods into the open fields, where they were forced to continue ſome time, which could not but work compaſſion in the beholders; but his majeſty's care was moſt ſignal on this occaſion, who, beſides his perſonal pains, was frequent in conſulting all ways for relieving thoſe diſtreſſed perſons, which produced ſo good effect, as well by his majeſty's proclamations, and orders iſſued to the neighbouring juſtices of the peace, to encourage the ſending proviſions into the markets, which are publickly known, as by other directions, that when his majeſty, fearing leſt other orders might not yet have been ſufficient, had commanded the victualler of his navy to ſend bread into Moorfields for the relief of the poor, which for the more ſpeedy ſupply he ſent in biſket out of the ſea ſtores; it was found that the markets had been already ſo well ſupplied,

that the people, being unaccuſtomed to that kind of bread, declined it, and ſo it was returned in great part to his majeſty's ſtores again, without any uſe made of it.

And we cannot but obſerve to the confuſion of all his Majeſty's enemies, who endeavoured to perſuade the world abroad of great parties and diſaffection at home, againſt his majeſty's government; that a greater inſtance of the affections of this city could never be given, than hath now been given in this ſad and moſt deplorable accident, when, if at any time, diſorder might have been expected, from the loſſes, diſtractions, and almoſt deſperation of ſome perſons in their private fortunes, thouſands of people not having habitations to cover them. And yet all this time it hath been ſo far from any appearance of deſigns or attempts againſt his majeſty's government, that his majeſty, and his royal brother, out of their care to ſtop and prevent the fire, expoſing frequently their perſons, with very ſmall attendants, in all parts of the town, ſometimes even to be intermixed with thoſe who laboured in the buſineſs; yet nevertheleſs, there hath not been obſerved ſo much as a murmuring word to fall from any; but, on the contrary, even thoſe perſons whoſe loſſes render their conditions moſt deſperate, and to be fit objects of others prayers, beholding thoſe frequent inſtances of his majeſty's care of his people, forgot their own miſery, and filled

filled the ſtreets, with their prayers for his majeſty, whoſe trouble they ſeemed to compaſſionate before their own.

Whitehall, Sept. 12. His majeſty in a religious ſenſe of God's heavy hand upon this kingdom, in the late dreadful fire happened in the city of London, hath been pleaſed to order that the tenth of October next be obſerved as a general and ſolemn faſt throughout England, Wales, &c. and that the diſtreſſes of thoſe who have more particularly ſuffered in that calamity be on that day moſt effectually recommended to the charity of all well-diſpoſed chriſtians, in the reſpective churches and chapels of this kingdom, to be afterward, by the hands of the lord mayor of the city of London, diſtributed for the relief of ſuch as ſhall be found moſt to need it.

Whitehall, Sept. 15. His majeſty purſuing, with a gracious impatience, his pious care for the ſpeedy reſtoration of his city of London, was pleaſed to paſs the twelfth inſtant his declaration in council to his city of London upon that ſubject, full of that princely tenderneſs and affection which he is pleaſed on all occaſions to expreſs for that his beloved city.

In the firſt place, upon the deſires of the lord mayor and court of aldermen, he is pleaſed to prohibit the haſty building of any edifice,

edifice, till ſuch ſpeedy care be taken for the re-edification of the city as may beſt ſecure it from the like accidents, and raiſe it to a greater beauty and comelineſs than formerly it had; the lord mayor and aldermen being required to pull down what ſhall contrary to this prohibition be erected, and return the names of ſuch refractory perſons to his majeſty and his council, to be proceeded againſt according to their deſerts.

That any conſiderable number of men addreſſing themſelves to the court of aldermen, and manifeſting in what places their ground lies upon which they intend to build, ſhall in ſhort time receive ſuch order and direction that they ſhall have no cauſe to complain.

That no perſon erect any houſe or building but of brick or ſtone, that they be encouraged to practiſe the good huſbandry of ſtrongly arching their cellars, by which divers perſons have received notable benefit in the late fire.

That Fleet-ſtreet, Cheapſide, Cornhill, and all other eminent ſtreets, be of a breadth, to prevent the miſchief one ſide may receive from the other by fire; that no ſtreets, eſpecially near the water be ſo narrow as to make the paſſages uneaſy or inconvenient; nor any allies or lanes erected, but upon neceſſity, for which there ſhall be publiſhed rules and particular orders.

That

That a fair key and wharf be left on all the rivers side, no houſes to be erected, but at a diſtance declared by the rules. That none of thoſe houſes next the river be inhabited by brewers, dyers, or ſugar-bakers, who by their continual ſmoaks contribute much to the unhealthineſs of the adjacent places; but that ſuch places be allotted them by the lord mayor and court of aldermen, as may be convenient for them, without prejudice of the neighbourhood.

That the lord mayor and court of aldermen cauſe an exact ſurvey to be made of the ruins, that it may appear to whom the houſes and ground did belong, what term the occupiers were poſſeſſed of, what rents were paid, and to whom the reverſions and inheritances did appertain, for the ſatisfying all intereſts, that no man's right be ſacrificed to the public convenience. After which a plot and model ſhall be framed of the whole building, which no doubt may ſo well pleaſe all perſons, as to induce them willingly to conform to ſuch rules and orders as ſhall be agreed to.

His majeſty likewiſe recommends the ſpeedy building ſome of thoſe many churches which have been burnt, to the charity and magnanimity of well-diſpoſed perſons, whom he will direct and aſſiſt in the model, and by his bounty encourage all other ways that ſhall be deſired.

And

And to encourage the work by his example, his majeſty will uſe all expedition to rebuild the cuſtom-houſe, and enlarge it for the more convenience of the merchants, in the place where it formerly ſtood: and upon all his own lands, will part with any thing of his own right and benefit, for the advancement of the public benefit and beauty of the city; and remit to all perſons who ſhall erect any new buildings, according to this his gracious declaration, all duties ariſing from hearth-money for the ſpace of ſeven years; as by the declaration itſelf more at large appears.

Whitehall, Sept. 18. This day was preſented to his majeſty by his highneſs the duke of York, Edmundbury Godfrey, Eſq; one of his majeſty's juſtices of the peace for the county of Middleſex, and city and liberty of Weſtminſter, who, after the public thanks and acknowledgment of his eminent ſervice done in helping to ſuppreſs the late fire in the city and liberty of London, received the honour of knighthood.

Whitehall, Sept. 29. This day, by warrant from his majeſty's principal ſecretaries of ſtate, the perſon of Valentine Knight was committed to the cuſtody of one of his majeſty's meſſengers in ordinary, for having preſumed to publiſh in print certain propoſitions for rebuilding the city of London, with conſiderable advantages to his majeſty's re-

venue by it, as if his majeſty would draw a benefit to himſelf from ſo public a calamity of his people, of which his majeſty is known to have ſo deep ſenſe, that he is pleaſed to ſeek rather by all means to give them eaſe under it.

Weſtminſter, Sept. 28. This day the houſe of commons reſolved, That the humble thanks of the houſe ſhould be given his majeſty for his great care and endeavour to prevent the burning of the city.

Gazette, No. 100.

Legborn, Oct. 18. The merchants here, in conſideration of the loſſes ſuſtained in London by the late fire, have out of their charity, raiſed near 300*l.* towards their relief, which they intend ſpeedily to return, to be diſtributed as his majeſty pleaſes.

London, Oct. 29. This day ſir William Bolton, lord mayor for the year enſuing, went in his coach to Weſtminſter, attended by his brethren the aldermen, the ſheriffs, and other eminent citizens in their coaches, where he was ſworn with the uſual ceremonies.

Whitehall, Oct. 30. Sir Jonas Moore, with ſome other proprietors of houſes lately demoliſhed by the fire, in Fleet-ſtreet, having prayed liberty to rebuild the ſame, according to ſuch model, form and ſcantling as ſhould be ſet them by the committee appointed by his majeſty for the advancement of that great work, (to which they offered with all will-

willingneſs to ſubmit and conform themſelves); it was this day ordered by his majeſty in council, that the ſaid proprietors ſhall have their liberty to re-edify their buildings accordingly.

By Stat. 19 and 20 Car. 2. Any three or more of the judges were authoriſed to hear and determine all differences between landlords and tenants, or occupiers of buildings or other things by the fire demoliſhed. They were, without the formalities of courts of law or equity, upon the inquiſition or verdict of jurors, teſtimonies of witneſſes upon oath, examination of perſons intereſted, or otherwiſe, to determine all differences: they were, in complaints, to iſſue out notes of time and place for the parties attendance, and proceed to make orders: their determinations were final, without appeal, writ of error, or reverſal. Their orders were to be obeyed by all perſons, and binding to repreſentatives for ever. The judgments and determinations were recorded in a book by them ſigned; which book is placed and intruſted in the cuſtody of the lord mayor and aldermen for the time being, to remain as a perpetual and laſting record. The judges were not to take any fee or reward, directly or indirectly, for any thing they did by virtue of that act. All differences not being determined, the act was continued in force till Sept. 29, 1672.

In gratitude to the memory of theſe judges, the city cauſed their pictures, in full proportion in their ſcarlet robes, to be ſet up in the Guildhall, with their names underneath, viz.

Sir Heneage Finch,
Sir Orlando Bridgman,
Sir Matthew Hale,
Sir Richard Rainsford,
Sir Edward Turner,
Sir Thomas Tyrril,
Sir John Archer,
Sir William Morton,
Sir Robert Atkins,
Sir Samuel Brown,
Sir Edward Atkins,
Sir John Vaughan,
Sir John North,
Sir Thomas Twiſden,
Sir Chriſtopher Turner,
Sir William Wyld,
Sir Hugh Windham,
Sir William Ellys,
Sir Edward Thurland,
Sir Timothy Lyttleton,
Sir John Kelynge,
Sir William Windham.

Sprat bef. Sons Clerg. Nov. 7, 1678.

The city roſe out of its aſhes after the dreadful fire, as it was firſt built, not preſently, by building continued ſtreets, in any one part, but firſt here a houſe and there a houſe, to which others by degrees were joined; till, at laſt, ſingle houſes were united into whole ſtreets; whole ſtreets into one beautiful city; not meerly, as before, a great and magnificent city, in a ſhort time it not only excelled itſelf, but any other city in the whole world, that comes near it, either in largeneſs, or number of inhabitants.

The

The beginning of the year 1670, the city of London was rebuilt, with more ſpace and ſplendor than had been before ſeen in England. The act for rebuilding it was drawn by Sir Matthew Hale, with ſo true judgment and foreſight, that the whole city was raiſed out of its aſhes without any ſuits of law; which if that bill had not prevented them, would have brought a ſecond charge on the city, not much leſs than the fire itſelf had been. And upon that, to the amazement of all Europe, London was, in four years time, rebuilt with ſo much beauty and magnificence, that they who ſaw it in both ſtates, before and after the fire, could not reflect on it, without wondering where the wealth could be found to bear ſo vaſt a loſs as was made by the fire, and ſo prodigious an expence as was laid out in the rebuilding. This good and great work was very much forwarded by ſir William Turner, lord mayor 1669. He was ſo much honoured and beloved, that at the end of the year they choſe him again; but he refuſed it, as being an unuſual thing.

Oldm. i. 547.

Whatever the unfortunate citizens of London ſuffered by this dreadful fire, it is manifeſt, that a greater bleſſing could not have happened for the good of poſterity; for, inſtead of very narrow, crooked, and incommodious ſtreets, dark, irregular and ill-contrived wooden houſes, with their ſeveral

Maitland's Survey, p. 437.

ſtories jutting out, or hanging over each other, whereby the circulation of the air was obſtructed, noiſom vapours harboured, and verminious, peſtilential atoms nouriſhed, as is manifeſt, by the city not being clear of the plague for twenty-five years before, and only free from contagion three years in above ſeventy; enlarging of the ſtreets, and modern way of building, there is ſuch a free circulation of ſweet air through the ſtreets, that offenſive vapours are expelled, and the city freed from peſtilential ſymptoms: ſo that it may now juſtly be averred that there is no place in the kingdom where the inhabitants enjoy a better ſtate of health, or live to a greater age, than the citizens of London.

Bill Mort.

Ibid.

SECT. III.

Several opinions concerning the cauſes of the great fire.

WHETHER the fire came caſually, or on deſign, remains ſtill a ſecret: though the general opinion might be that it was caſual, yet there were preſumptions on the other ſide of a very odd nature. Great calamities naturally produce various conjectures; men ſeldom conſidering, that the moſt ſtupendous effects often proceed from the moſt minute cauſes, or moſt remote accidents. People failed not to give a ſcope to their imagination, and to form gueſſes concerning the cauſes and authors of this afflicting and aſtoniſhing misfortune.

Burnet abridged, 120.

The

The king in his ſpeech calls it "GOD'S JUDGMENT;" the pious and religious, and at firſt all other men, generally and naturally aſcribed it to the juſt vengeance of heaven, on a city where vice and immorality reigned ſo openly and ſhamefully, and which had not been ſufficiently humbled by the raging peſtilence of the foregoing year. God's judgment.

Sir Edward Turner, ſpeaker of the houſe of commons, at preſenting bills for the royal aſſent, ſays, "We muſt for ever with humility acknowledge the juſtice of God in "puniſhing this whole nation by the late "dreadful conflagration of London." Echard, iii. 175.

The act of common-council for rebuilding ſays, "The fire was, by all, juſtly reſented "as a moſt ſad and diſmal judgment of "heaven."

But time ſoon produced abundance of ſuſpicions and variety of opinions concerning the means and inſtruments made uſe of.

There were ſome ſo bold as even to ſuſpect the king. Thoſe reports, and Oates's and Bedloe's narratives, are ſuppoſitions too monſtrous, and the evidence too wretchedly mean to deſerve conſideration. The king. Rapin, ii. 643. Echard, iii. 168.

The citizens were not well ſatisfied with the duke of York's behaviour; they thought him a little too gay and negligent for ſuch an occaſion; that his look and air diſcovered the pleaſure he took in that dreadful ſpectacle: on which account, a jealouſy that he Duke of York. Burnet abridged, 120. Oldm. i. 528.

was concerned in it was ſpread with great induſtry, but with very little appearance of truth.

French and Dutch.

Some ſuſpected it was an inſidious way of the Dutch and French making war upon the Engliſh; their two fleets being then neareſt to a conjunction. What increaſed the ſuſpicion was, that ſome criminals that ſuffered were ſaid to be under the direction of a committee at London, and received orders from another council in Holland.

Echard. Rapin.

Not long before the fire the French ſent the governor of Chouſey in a ſmall boat with a letter to major-general Lambert, then priſoner in Guernſey, to offer him terms to contrive the delivery of that iſland to them.

Divers ſtrangers, both French and Dutch, were apprehended upon ſuſpicion, impriſoned, and ſtrictly examined. It was ſaid, a Dutch boy of ten years old, confeſſed, that his father, his uncle, and himſelf, had thrown fire-balls into the houſe where the fire began through a window which ſtood open.

Burnet abridged, 120.

The Engliſh fleet had ſome time before landed on the Vly, an iſland near the Texel, and burnt it; upon which ſome came to De Wit, and offered, in revenge, if they were but aſſiſted, to ſet London on fire; but he rejected the [villainous] propoſal; and thought no more on it till he heard the city was burnt.

The fire which laid ſo great a part of London in aſhes, gave a freſh occaſion to the enemies

enemies of the republicans to charge them with being the malicious authors thereof; becauſe the fire happened to break out the third of September, a day eſteemed fortunate to the republicans, on account of the victories of Dunbar and Worceſter, obtained by Oliver Cromwell, when general of the armies of the commonwealth of England. Republicans. Rapin, ii. 643.

In the April before, ſome commonwealth men were found in a plot, and hanged; and at their execution confeſſed, that they had been requeſted to aſſiſt in a deſign of firing London on the ſecond of September. Burnet abridged, 120.

At the trial of the conſpirators at the Old Bailey, it appeared, a deſign was laid to ſurprize the Tower and fire the city; the third of September was pitched on for the attempt, as being found by Lilly's almanack, and a ſcheme erected for that purpoſe, to be a lucky day. The third of September was a day auſpicious and full of expectation from one party, but at this time ominous and direful to the nation. The city was burnt at the time projected and prognoſticated; which gave a ſtrong ſuſpicion, though not a proof, of the authors and promoters of it. Gazette, No. 48. Echard, iii. 166.

The Dutch were preſſed by the commonwealth men to invade England, and were aſſured of powerful aſſiſtance, and hopes of a general inſurrection, but they would not venture in ſo hazardous a deſign. Burnet abr. 118.

Though ſeveral perſons were impriſoned, it was not poſſible to diſcover, or prove, that the houſe where this dreadful calamity began, was fired on purpoſe. Whether it was wilful or accidental was a long time a party diſpute.

Papiſts and Jeſuits. Oldm. 529.

The great talk at that time was, Who were the burners of the city? Some ſaid it was contrived and carried on by a conſpiracy of the Papiſts and Jeſuits, which was afterward offered to be made appear in the popiſh plot. And there came in ſo many teſtimonies to prove that it was the plotted weapon of the papiſts, as cauſed the parliament to appoint a committee to enquire into it, and receive informations.

Crookſhanks's hiſt. of the church of Scotl. i. 207.

By the dreadful fire in 1666, multitudes of people loſt their eſtates, goods and merchandizes; and many families, once in flouriſhing circumſtances, were reduced to beggary. From the inſcription on the plinth of the lower pedeſtal of the Monument it appears that the papiſts were the authors of this fire; the parliament being of this perſuaſion, addreſſed the king to iſſue a proclamation, requiring all popiſh prieſts and Jeſuits to depart the kingdom within a month; and appointed a committee, who received evidence of ſome papiſts, who were ſeen throwing fire-balls into houſes, and of others who had materials for it in their pockets.

This

This ſad diſaſter produced ſome kind of liberty to the non-conformiſts.

A ſudden and dreadful maſſacre of the proteſtants was feared; and the ſuſpicion confirmed by particular kinds of knives found after the fire in barrels. Vincent. Terrible Voice, 138.

Several evidences were given to the committee that men were ſeen in ſeveral parts of the city caſting fire-balls into houſes; ſome that were brought to the guard of ſoldiers, and to the duke of York, but were never heard of afterwards. Some weeks after ſir Robert Brooks, chairman of the committee, went to France, and as he was ferried over a river was drowned, with a kinſman of his, and the buſineſs drowned with him. Oldm. i. 547.

Oates, in his narrative ſays, The dreadful fire in 1666 was principally managed by Strange, the provincial of the Jeſuits, in which the ſociety employed eighty or eighty-ſix men, and ſpent ſeven hundred fire-balls; and over all their vaſt expence, they were fourteen thouſand pounds gainers by the plunder; among which was a box of jewels conſiſting of a thouſand carats of diamonds. He farther learned, that the fire in Southwark in 1676 was brought about by the like means; and though in that they were at the expence of a thouſand pounds, they made ſhift to get two thouſand clear into their own pockets. Rapin, ii. 690.

Mr. Echard was told by an eminent prelate, that Dr. Grant, a papiſt, was ſtrongly

ſuſpected,

ſuſpected, who having a ſhare in the water-works, contrived, as is believed, to ſtop up the pipes the night before the fire broke out, ſo that it was many hours before any water could be got after the uſual manner.

Rapin, ii. 643.

Dr. Lloyd, afterward biſhop of Worceſter, told Dr. Burnet, That one Grant a papiſt, had ſometime before applied himſelf to Lloyd, who had great intereſt with the counteſs of Clarendon, (who had a large eſtate in the new river, which is brought from Ware to London) and ſaid he could raiſe that eſtate conſiderably if ſhe would make him a truſtee for her. His ſchemes were probable, and he was made one of the board that governed that matter; and by that he had a right to come as often as he pleaſed to view their works at Iſlington. He went thither the Saturday before the fire broke out, and called for the key of the place where the heads of the pipes were, and turned all the cocks, which were then open, and ſtopped the water, and went away, and carried the keys with him. When the fire broke out next morning, they opened the pipes in the ſtreets to find water, but there was none. Some hours were loſt in ſending to Iſlington, where the doors were to be broke open, and the cocks turned; and it was long before the water got from Iſlington. Grant denied that he turned the cocks; but the officer of the works affirmed that he had, according to order,

order, ſet them all a-running, and that no perſon had got the keys from him but Grant; who confeſſed he had carried away the keys, but did it without deſign.

When we conſider, ſeveral depoſitions were made after the fire, of its breaking out in ſeveral different places at the ſame time, and that one man confeſſed his ſetting fire to the houſes where it began, when he was executed for it: when we remember biſhop Lloyd's teſtimony concerning Grant; we cannot eaſily be convinced that it was entirely accidental.

Biſhop Kennet gives the following account: there was but one man tried at the Old Bailey for being the incendiary, who was convicted by his own confeſſion, and executed for it. His name was Roger † Hubert, a French Hugonot * of Rohan in Normandy. Some people ſhammed away this confeſſion, and ſaid he was *Non compos mentis*; and had a mind, it ſeems, to aſſume the glory of being hanged for the greateſt villain. Others ſay he was ſober and penitent; and being, after conviction, carried through the ruins to ſhew where he put fire, he himſelf directed through the aſhes and rubbiſh, and pointed at the ſpot where the firſt burning houſe ſtood. Hubert.

† Robert, Rapin.

* Biſhop Burnet and ſome others ſay he was a papiſt.

The

Burnet. Maitland. The fire was generally charged on the papiſts; one Hubert a Frenchman, who was ſeized in Eſſex as he was flying to France, confeſſed he had begun the conflagration. He was blindfolded, and purpoſely conducted to wrong places, where he told them it was not the ſpot where he began the flames; but when he was brought to the right, he confeſſed that was the place where he threw the fire-ball into the baker's houſe, the place where the fatal fire began, which he perſiſted in to the laſt moments of his execution. He was hanged upon no other evidence: though his broken account made ſome believe him melancholy mad.

Burnet abr. 120.

Howell. Impartial hiſtory of James II. p. 9. But Oates ſeveral years afterwards informed the world the execrable deed was performed by a knot of eighty Jeſuits, friars, and prieſts, of ſeveral nations.

Echard, i. 169. After all examinations there was but one man tried for being the incendiary, who confeſſing the fact was executed for it: this was Robert Hubert, a French Hugonot of Rohan in Normandy, a perſon falſly ſaid to be a papiſt, but really a ſort of lunatic, who by meer accident was brought into England juſt before the breaking out of the fire, but not landed till two days after, as appeared by the evidence of Laurence Peterſon, the maſter of the ſhip who had him on board.

It was ſoon after complained of, that Hubert was not ſufficiently examined who ſet

ſet him to work, and who joined with him. And Mr. Hawles in his remarks upon Fitzharris's trial is bold to ſay, that the commons reſolving to examine Hubert upon that matter next day, Hubert was hanged before the houſe ſat, ſo could tell no farther tales.

Lord Ruſſel and ſir Henry Capel obſerved to the houſe of commons (1680) that thoſe that were taken in carrying on that wicked act, were generally diſcharged without trial. Echard, iii. 583. Rapin, ii. 714.

In 1679 the houſe of commons were ſuddenly alarmed with an information of a freſh deſign of the papiſts to burn London a ſecond time. The houſe of one Bird in Fetterlane being ſet on fire, his ſervant Elizabeth Oxly, was ſuſpected of firing it wilfully, and ſent to priſon. She confeſſed the fact, and declared ſhe had been employed to do it by one Stubbs, a papiſt, who had promiſed her five pounds. Stubbs being taken up, confeſſed he perſuaded her to it, and that father Giffard his confeſſor put him upon it; telling him it was no ſin to burn all the houſes of heretics. He added he had frequent conferences on this affair with Giffard and two Iriſhmen. Stubbs and the maid declared, the papiſts were to make an inſurrection, and expected an army of ſixty thouſand men from France. It was generally inferred from this incident, that it was not Giffard's fault, [nor that of his party] that the Rapin. Father Giffard.

city

city of London was not burnt as in the year 1666: and confirmed thoſe in their opinion who thought that general conflagration was the contrivance and work of the papiſts.

Vincent, 46, 47.

The hand of man was made uſe of in the beginning and carrying on of this fire. The beginning of the fire at ſuch a time, when there had been ſo much hot weather which had dried the houſes, and made them the more fit for fuel; the beginning of it in ſuch a place, where there were ſo many timber houſes, and the ſhops filled with ſo much combuſtible matter; and the beginning of it juſt when the wind did blow ſo fiercely upon that corner toward the reſt of the city, which then was like tinder to the ſparks; this doth ſmell of a popiſh deſign, hatched in the ſame neſt with the gunpowder plot. The world ſufficiently knows how correſpondent this is to popiſh principles and practices; they might, without any ſcruple of their kinds of conſcience, burn an heretical city, as they count it, into aſhes: for beſide the diſpenſations they can have from his holineſs (rather his wickedneſs) it is not unlikely but they count ſuch an action as this meritorious.

Oldm. i. 651.

Lord chancellor (earl of Nottingham) in his ſpeech in giving judgment againſt lord viſcount Stafford, ſaid, "Who can doubt "any longer that London was burnt by "papiſts?"

" papiſts?" though there was not one word in the whole trial relating to it.

The inſcription on the plinth of the lower pedeſtal of the Monument has given an opportunity to the reverend Mr. Crookſhanks to ſay, it appears that the papiſts were the authors of the fire; and that the parliament being of the ſame perſuaſion addreſſed the king. Hiſt. ch. Scotl. i. 207.

The inſcription is in Engliſh:

" This pillar was ſet up in perpetual re- " membrance of the moſt dreadful burning of " this proteſtant city, begun and carried on by " the treachery and malice of the popiſh fac- " tion, in the beginning of September, in the " year of our Lord 1666. In order to the " carrying on their horrid plot for extirpating " the proteſtant religion and old Engliſh " liberty, and introducing popery and ſlavery." Chamberlayne's Preſent ſtate, 260.

This inſcription was eraſed by king James upon his ſucceſſion to the crown; but re-inſcribed preſently after the revolution, in ſuch deep characters as are not eaſily to be blotted out.

The latter part of the inſcription on the north ſide [*Sed furor papiſticus, qui tam dira patravit, nondum reſtinguitur.*] containing an offenſive truth, was eraſed at king James's acceſſion, and re-inſcribed ſoon after the revolution. Preſ. ſtate, 259. See p. 34. (2).

Mr. Pope differs much in his opinion concerning theſe inſcriptions, when he ſays,

Where London's column, pointing at the skies,
Like a tall bully, rears its head, and lies.

It ſeems almoſt wonderful (ſays the author of the Craftſman) that the plague was not as peremptorily imputed to the papiſts as the fire.

Seymour. There was a general ſuſpicion of incendiaries laying combuſtible ſtuff in many places, Vincent, 49. having obſerved ſeveral houſes to be on fire at the ſame time: but we are told, God with his great bellows did blow upon it, and made it ſpread quickly, and horrible flakes of fire mounted to the ſkies.

Natural cauſes. There was a ſtrange concurrence of ſeveral natural cauſes which occaſioned the fire ſo vigorouſly to ſpread and increaſe.

Seymour, i. 454. There was a great ſupineneſs and negligence in the people of the houſe where it began: it began between one or two o'clock after midnight, when all were in a dead ſleep: on a Saturday night, when many of the eminent citizens, merchants, and others, were retired into the country, and left ſervants to look to their city houſes: it happened in the long vacation, at a time of year when many wealthy citizens are wont to be in the country at fairs, or getting in debts, and making up accounts with their chapmen.

The houſes where it began were moſtly built of timber, and thoſe very old: the cloſeneſs and narrowneſs of the ſtreets did

much facilitate the progreſs of the fire, and prevented the bringing in engines. The wares and commodities ſtowed and vended in thoſe parts were moſt combuſtible of any other, as oil, pitch, tar, cordage, hemp, flax, roſin, wax, butter, cheeſe, wine, brandy, ſugar, and ſuch like.

The warmth of the preceding ſeaſon, had ſo dried the timber, that it was never more apt to take fire; and an eaſterly wind (which is the drieſt of all) had blown for ſeveral days together before, and at that time very ſtrongly.

The unexpected failing of the water from the New River; the engine at London-bridge called the Thames water-tower was out of order, and in a few hours was itſelf burnt down, ſo that the pipes which conveyed the water from thence through the ſtreets, were ſoon empty.

Beſide, there was an unuſual negligence at firſt, and a confidence of eaſily quenching it, and of its ſtopping at ſeveral places afterward; which at laſt turned into confuſion, conſternation, and deſpair; people chuſing rather by flight to ſave their goods, than by a vigorous oppoſition to ſave their own houſes and the whole city.

Thus a ſmall ſpark, from an unknown cauſe, for want of timely care, increaſed to ſuch a flame, that nothing could extinguiſh,

which laid waſte the greateſt part of the city in three days time.

Echard, iii. 168. The king in his ſpeech to the parliament ſays, "God be thanked for our meeting together in this place: little time hath paſſed "ſince we were almoſt in deſpair of having this "place left to meet in. You ſee the diſmal "ruins the fire hath made: and nothing "but a miracle of God's mercy could have "preſerved what is left from the ſame de-"ſtruction."

Burnet abr. 121. When the preſumptions of the city's being burnt by deſign came to be laid before a committee of the houſe of commons, they were found of no weight; and the many ſtories, publiſhed at that time with great aſſurance, were declared void of credibility.

See the paſſage from Maitland, p. 51. ante. After all, it may perhaps be queried, whether the foregoing rumours and examinations, though incongruous with each other, may not afford ſome colour to a whiſper, that the government itſelf was not without ſome ground of ſuſpicion of having been the ſecret cauſe of the conflagration; to afford an opportunity of reſtoring the capital of the nation, in a manner more ſecure from future contagion, more generally wholſome for the inhabitants, more ſafe from fires, and more beautiful on the whole from the united effect of all theſe ſalutary purpoſes. Such however has been the reſult of that temporary diſaſter, whether accidental or not; and if intended,

intended, a more pardonable inſtance of doing evil that good may come of it, cannot perhaps be produced.

SECT. IV.

Of the MONUMENT.

THE act of parliament 19 and 20 Car. II. enacts, that, The better to preſerve the memory of this dreadful viſitation, a column or pillar of braſs or ſtone be erected on, or as near unto the place where the fire unhappily began, as conveniently may be; in perpetual remembrance thereof: with ſuch inſcription thereon as the lord mayor and court of aldermen ſhall direct.

In obedience to which act, the fine piece of architecture called *The Monument* was erected, at the expence of fourteen thouſand five hundred pounds: it is the deſign of the great ſir Chriſtopher Wren, and undoubtedly the fineſt modern column in the world, and in ſome reſpects may vie with the moſt famous of antiquity, being twenty-four feet higher than Trajan's pillar at Rome. It is of the *Doric* order, fluted; its altitude, two hundred and two feet from the ground; greateſt diameter of the body fifteen feet; the ground bounded by the plinth or lower part of the pedeſtal, twenty-eight feet ſquare; and the pedeſtal is in altitude forty feet; all of Portland ſtone. Within is a large ſtair-

[Tuſcan.] Preſ. ſtate.

caſe of black marble, containing three hundred forty-five ſteps, ten inches and an half broad and ſix inches riſers: a balcony within thirty-two feet from the top, whereon is a ſpacious and curious gilded flame, very ſuitable to the intent of the whole column.

On the front or weſt ſide of the die of the pedeſtal of this magnificent column is finely carved a curious emblem of this tragical ſcene, by the maſterly hand of Mr. Gabriel Cibber. The eleven principal figures are in alto, the reſt in baſſo relievo.

At the north end of the plain the city is repreſented in flames, and the inhabitants in conſternation, their arms extended upward, crying for ſuccour. A little nearer the horizon, the arms, cap of maintenance, and other enſigns of the city's grandeur, partly buried under the ruins. On the ruins lies the figure of a woman crowned with a caſtle, her breaſts pregnant, and in her hand a ſword; repreſenting the ſtrong, plentiful and well governed city of London in diſtreſs. The king is repreſented on a place aſcended to by three ſteps, providing by his power and prudence for the comfort of his citizens and ornament of his city. On the ſteps ſtand three women; 1. Liberty, having in her right hand a hat wherein the word *Liberty*, denoting the freedom or liberty given theſe who engaged three years in the work. 2. Ichnographia, with rule and compaſſes in one hand,

and

and a ſcroll in the other; near her the emblem of Induſtry, a bee-hive. 3. Imagination, holding the emblem of Invention. All which intimate, that the ſpeedy re-erection of the city was principally owing to liberty, imagination, contrivance, art and induſtry. There is the figure of Time raiſing the woman in diſtreſs, and Providence with a winged hand containing an eye, promiſing peace and plenty, by pointing to thoſe two figures in the clouds. Behind the king the work is going forward. Under the king's feet appears Envy enraged at the proſpect of ſucceſs, and blowing flames out of his mouth. The figure of a lion with one fore-foot tied up, and the muzzle of a cannon, denote this deplorable misfortune to have happened in time of war; and Mars with a chaplet in his hand is an emblem of approaching peace. Round the cornice are noble enrichments of trophy work, the king's arms, ſword, cap of maintenance, &c. at the angles, four very large dragons, the ſupporters of the city arms.

On this column of perpetual remembrance the lord mayor and court of aldermen have ordered inſcriptions to be cut in Latin:

That on the north ſide deſcribes the deſolation of the city in aſhes; and is thus tranſlated:

In the year of Chriſt 1666, the ſecond day of September, eaſtward from hence, at the

diſtance of two hundred and two feet, (the height of this column) about midnight a moſt terrible fire broke out, which, driven by a high wind, not only waſted the adjacent parts, but alſo places very remote, with incredible noiſe and fury: it conſumed eighty-nine churches, the city gates, Guildhall, many public ſtructures, hoſpitals, ſchools, libraries, a vaſt number of ſtately edifices, thirteen thouſand two hundred dwelling houſes, four hundred ſtreets; of twenty-ſix wards it entirely conſumed fifteen, and left eight others ſhattered and half burnt; the ruins of the city were four hundred thirty-ſix acres, from the Tower by the Thames ſide to the Temple-church, and from the north-eaſt gate of the city wall to Holborn-bridge: to the eſtates and fortunes of the citizens it was mercileſs, but to their lives very favourable †; that it might in all things reſemble the laſt conflagration of the world.

The deſtruction was ſudden, for in a ſmall ſpace of time, the ſame city was ſeen moſt flouriſhing, and reduced to nothing.

Three days after, when this fatal fire had baffled all human counſels and endeavours, in the opinions of all, as it were by the will of

† It was a very miraculous circumſtance, amidſt all this deſtruction and public confuſion, no perſon was known either to be burnt, or trodden to death in the ſtreets.

Burnet abr. 120.

heaven,

heaven, it ſtopped, and on every ſide was extinguiſhed.—

The ſouth ſide deſcribes the glorious reſtoration of the city; and has been thus tranſlated:

Charles the ſecond, ſon of Charles the martyr, king of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, defender of the faith, a moſt gracious prince, commiſerating the deplorable ſtate of things, while the ruins were yet ſmoaking, provided for the comfort of his citizens and the ornament of his city; remitted their taxes, and referred the petitions of the magiſtrates and inhabitants to the parliament, who immediately paſſed an act, that public buildings ſhould be reſtored to greater beauty with public money, to be raiſed by an impoſition on coals; that churches, and the cathedral of St. Paul's, ſhould be rebuilt from their foundations with all magnificence; that bridges, gates and priſons ſhould be made new; the ſewers cleanſed; the ſtreets made ſtrait and regular; ſuch as were ſteep, levelled, and thoſe too narrow, made wider; markets and ſhambles removed to ſeparate places. They alſo enacted, that every houſe ſhould be built with party-walls, and all in front raiſed of equal height, and thoſe walls all of ſquare ſtone or brick; and that no man ſhould delay beyond the ſpace of ſeven years. Moreover, care was taken by law to prevent all ſuits about their bounds. Alſo,

anniverſary prayers were enjoined †; and to perpetuate the memory hereof to poſterity, they cauſed this column to be erected. The work was carried on with diligence, and London is reſtored; but whether with greater ſpeed or beauty may be made a queſtion. Three years' time ſaw that finiſhed which was ſuppoſed to be the buſineſs of an age.

The eaſt ſide, over the door, has an inſcription, thus Engliſhed:

This pillar was begun, ſir Richard Ford, knight, being lord mayor of London, in the year 1671: carried on in the mayoralties of ſir George Waterman, knight; ſir Robert Hanſon, knight; ſir William Hooker, knight; ſir Robert Viner, knight; ſir Joſeph Sheldon, knight; and finiſhed, ſir Thomas Davis, knight, being lord mayor, in the year 1677.

The inſcription on the plinth of the lower pedeſtal is in page 63.

† By ſtat. 19 and 20 Car. II. it is enacted, That the citizens of London, and their ſucceſſors for the time to come, may retain the memory of ſo ſad a deſolation, and reflect ſeriouſly on the manifold iniquities, which are the unhappy cauſes of ſuch judgments: Be it therefore enacted, That the ſecond day of September (unleſs the ſame happen to be Sunday, and if ſo, then the next day following) be yearly for ever hereafter obſerved as a day of faſting and humiliation within the ſaid city and liberties thereof, to implore the mercy of Almighty God upon the ſaid city; to make devout prayers and ſupplications unto him, to divert the like calamity for the time to come.

On

On a ſtone in the front of the houſe built on the ſpot where the fire began, there was (very lately) the following inſcription:

Here, by the permiſſion of heaven, hell broke looſe on this proteſtant city, from the malicious hearts of barbarous papiſts, by the hand of their agent Hubert, who confeſſed, and on the ruins of this place declared his fact, for which he was hanged, viz. That he here began the dreadful fire, which is deſcribed and perpetuated on and by the neighbouring pillar. Erected 1680, in the mayoralty of ſir Patience Ward, knight.

SECT. V.

Of fires at London bridge; and other remarkable fires in London, and ſeveral parts of England.

THE firſt bridge built at or near the place where London bridge now ſtands was of timber, and burnt down, in the year 1136, in the reign of king Stephen: at which time alſo all that part of the city from Aldgate to St. Paul's church was conſumed.

About four years after building a new bridge of ſtone, with incredible art and expence, a fire broke out in Southwark, which taking hold of the church of St. Mary Overy's, a ſouth wind communicated the flames to the houſes on the north end of the bridge,

bridge, which interrupted the paſſages, and ſtopped the return of a multitude of people, who had run from London to aſſiſt in extinguiſhing the fire in Southwark; and while the amazing croud were endeavouring to force a paſſage back to the city through the flames on the north end of the bridge, the fire broke out at the ſouth end alſo; ſo that being incloſed between two great fires, above three thouſand perſons periſhed in the flames, or were drowned by over-loading the veſſels that ventured to come to their aſſiſtance.

In the year 1632, on the 17th of February, the buildings on the north end of the bridge, containing forty-two houſes, were burnt down, by the careleſsneſs of a needle-maker's ſervant near St. Magnus church, leaving a tub of hot aſhes under a pair of ſtairs: this fire burned very furiouſly, and there being great ſcarcity of water, occaſioned by the Thames being almoſt frozen over, all thoſe buildings were conſumed in leſs than eight hours.

In the year 1666, the bridge ſuffered in the general conflagration of the city, moſt of the buildings being conſumed, except a few at the ſouth end erected in the reign of king John; the very ſtone-work was ſo much injured and weakened by the melancholy event that it coſt the bridge-houſe fifteen hundred pounds to repair the damages which the piers and arches had received.

London

London bridge being, 1746, in many parts ruinous, and in all parts dangerous and inconvenient, an act of parliament was obtained for taking down the houſes, opening and repairing the bridge: in order to which, a ſtrong temporary bridge, compoſed of wood, was erected on the weſtern ſterlings of the old ſtructure, with amazing expedition. A great number of hands were employed in demoliſhing the old work; the old pavement was taken up, ſeveral of the piers demoliſhed almoſt to the water's edge, and the whole ſpace where the houſes had been taken down was one confuſed heap of rubbiſh; at that time the temporary bridge burſt into a flame, and was totally conſumed; the conflagration began about eleven at night, the eleventh of April 1758: but whether by accident †, or ſome vile incendiary, was never diſcovered.

Auguſt 14, 1077, in the time of William the firſt, there was a very great fire in London: and in 1087, the greateſt part of that city was burnt down; as were alſo moſt of the chief towns in England. Rapin, i. 181.

† As it is uſual for ſervants behind coaches with flambeaus in their hands, to clear them by ſtriking them on the hind wheels; it is no forced ſuppoſition, that ſome careleſs fellow might have ſtruck his flambeaux on the top of the ſide palliſade, for the ſame purpoſe: the flaming wax of which dropping and adhering to the outſide, might eaſily have cauſed ſuch a diſaſter.

In

Rapin, i. 189. In 1092, in the reign of William Rufus, was a great fire, which burnt down great part of London; and did more damage than the earthquake, a great ſtorm, and the inundation of the ſea which covered the lands now called the Goodwin ſands.

Burnet abr. 183. In his reign alſo the cities of Worceſter and Rocheſter were burnt.

Rapin, i. 199. (7). The city of Worceſter was burnt to the ground June 8, 1113, in the reign of king Henry the firſt.

Rapin, i. 199. May 9, 1123, in the time of Henry the firſt, the city of Lincoln was almoſt burnt down.

Rapin, i. 211. (1). June 3, 1137, the cathedral at Rocheſter was burnt down, as was alſo, the next day, the whole city of York, with the cathedral, and thirty-nine churches: the twenty-ſeventh of the ſame month the city of Bath was burnt.

Chamberl. Preſ. ſtate, 254. St. Thomas's hoſpital in Southwark underwent the ſame fate as that of St. Bartholomew's in the year 1666; the fabric eſcaped, but moſt of the eſtates belonging thereto were conſumed. The revenues thereof likewiſe ſuffered conſiderably by three great fires in Southwark in the years 1676, 1681, and 1689.

May 25, 1671, there was a very great fire at Oxford.

Annals of the univ. 333. On Monday September the twentieth, 1675, in the afternoon, a dreadful fire began at

at Northampton, and in a few hours burnt down moſt part of the town, the market-place, (which was a very goodly one) the ſtately church of Allhallows, two other pariſh churches, and above three fourth parts of the whole town was conſumed and laid in aſhes. The loſs was computed at two hundred thouſand pounds ſterling. Bedloe's narrative, 25.

May 27, 1676, about four in the morning, broke out a lamentable fire in the borough of Southwark, which continued with much violence all that day, and part of the night following, till above ſix hundred houſes were burnt or blown up. Annals of the univ. 347.

March 22, 1682-3, about eight o'clock at night, there ſuddenly broke out a terrible fire at Newmarket, which conſumed about half the town. The king (Charles the ſecond) by the approach of the fury of the flames, was immediately driven out of his own palace, and removed himſelf to another quarter of the town, remote from the fire, and as yet free from any annoyance of ſmoke and aſhes. There his majeſty finding he might be tolerably accommodated, reſolved to ſtay, and continue his recreations as before, till the day firſt appointed for his return back to London.— But he had no ſooner declared that reſolution, when the wind, as conducted by an inviſible power, ſuddenly changed about, and blew the ſmoke and cinders directly on his new lodgings, and in a moment Echard, iii. 669.

made

made them as untenable as the other. Upon which, the king being put to a new ſhift, and not finding the like convenience elſewhere, immediately declared he would ſpeedily return to Whitehall, which he did very ſhortly afterward. This was called, A Providential Fire.

Storm, p. 36. Friday November 26, 1703, (during the height of the great ſtorm) a town in Norfolk was almoſt ruined by a furious fire, which burnt with ſuch vehemence, and was ſo fanned by the tempeſt, that the inhabitants had no power to concern themſelves in extinguiſhing it; the wind blew the flames, together with the ruins, ſo about, that there was no ſtanding near it; for if the people came to windward, they were in danger to be blown into the flames; and if to leeward, the flames were ſo blown into their faces, they could not bear to come near it.

Honiton in Devonſhire was ſo conſiderable a town in the year 1747, that on Sunday, July 19, one hundred ſeventy-eight houſes, beſides out-houſes, ſtables, and other edifices, were entirely conſumed by flames; which were valued by honeſt and underſtanding men at thirty-five thouſand ſix hundred pounds: and the goods of poor artificers burnt therein, in woollen, linen, and mercery goods, amounted, at a moderate computation, to the value of eight thouſand pounds.

An advertiſement was publiſhed in the news-papers, by authority of the port-reeve, reeve, and other principal inhabitants, vouched by ſome of the greateſt men in the county, which informs, that the fire conſumed the greater part of the town.

CHAP. II.

Account of ſome remarkable fires, ancient and modern.

IN the conſulate of Lutatius Cerco and Manlius Atticus, a fire broke out in the Upper City of Rome, and ſpread as far as the Forum. The Romans thereby loſt more wealth in one day than they had got by many victories. The temple of Veſta was not exempted from the common misfortune; and the moſt ancient monuments of religion had been deſtroyed, had not Cœcilius Metellus, then Pontifex Maximus, ventured his life to ſave them. He made his way through the flames, went into the ſanctuary where the Palladium was kept, and ſaved it from the fire: an action more celebrated in hiſtory than the glorious victory he gained over the Carthaginians at the head of a conſular army. One of his arms was greatly hurt in the attempt; and, which was much worſe, he entirely loſt his ſight. This heroical action procured him a mark of diſtinction which had

Univ. Hiſt. xii. 209.

had never been granted to any man: he was allowed to be drawn to the ſenate houſe in a chariot.

Univ. Hiſt. xiii. 535. The year Tiberius triumphed over the Germans, a dreadful fire happened at Rome, which reduced to aſhes many ſtately buildings, and was thought to have been occaſioned by the debtors, with a deſign to make their eſcape, in that confuſion, out of the houſes of their creditors. To prevent the like misfortune and diſorder for the future, Auguſtus created new officers, who were permitted, on certain days, to wear the robe peculiar to magiſtrates, to have two lictors to attend them, and ſix hundred ſlaves, for the extinguiſhing of fires.

Univ. Hiſt. xiv. 209. In the reign of Tiberius, fifty thouſand perſons were deſtroyed or maimed by the fall of an amphitheatre; and while that affliction was freſh, a fire broke out on Mount Cœlius, which burnt with ſuch rage and violence that it utterly conſumed all the houſes in that quarter of the city.

Univ. Hiſt. xv. 265. The capitol at Rome was burnt in Sylla's time, by the negligence of thoſe who kept it, but Sylla rebuilt it in a more magnificent manner. It was burnt a ſecond time in the reign of Vitellius, and repaired by Veſpaſian. It underwent the ſame misfortune under Titus, by lightning, and was rebuilt by Domitian.

In

In the 64th year of the chriſtian æra, the 11th of Nero's reign, happened the famous burning of Rome; but whether by chance, or the contrivance of the prince, is not determined, both being aſſerted by authors. The fire began among certain ſhops, in which were kept ſuch goods, as were proper to feed it, and ſpread every where with ſuch amazing rapidity, that its havock was felt in diſtant ſtreets before any meaſures to ſtop it could be tried. Beſide an infinite number of common houſes, all the noble monuments of antiquity, all the ſtately palaces, temples, porticoes, with goods, riches, furniture, and merchandize, to an immenſe value, were devoured by the flames, which raged firſt in the lower regions of the city, and then mounted to the higher, with ſuch terrible violence and impetuoſity, as to fruſtrate all relief. The ſhrieks of the women, the various efforts of ſome endeavouring to ſave the young and tender, of others attempting to aſſiſt the aged and infirm, and the hurry of ſuch as ſtrove only to provide for themſelves, occaſioned a mutual interruption, and univerſal confuſion. Many, while they chiefly regarded the danger that purſued them behind, found themſelves ſuddenly involved in the flames before, and on every ſide. If they eſcaped into the quarters adjoining, or into the parts quite remote, there too they met

Univ. Hiſt. xv. 44.

with the devouring flames. At laſt, no knowing whither to fly, nor where too ſeek ſanctuary, they abandoned the city, and fled to the open fields. Some, out of deſpair for the loſs of their whole ſubſtance, others, through tenderneſs for their children and relations, which they had not been able to ſnatch from the flames, ſuffered themſelves to periſh in them, though they had eaſy means to eſcape. No man dared to ſtop the progreſs of the fire, there being many who had no other buſineſs but to prevent, with repeated menaces, all attempts of that nature; nay, ſome were, in the face of the public, ſeen to throw lighted firebrands into the houſes, declaring loudly that they were authorized ſo to do; but whether this was only a device to plunder more freely, or in reality they had ſuch orders, was never certainly known.

Nero, who was then at Antium, did not offer to return to the city, till he heard that the fire was advancing to his palace, which, after his arrival was in ſpite of all oppoſition, burnt down to the ground, with all the houſes adjoining to it. However, Nero affecting compaſſion to the multitude, thus vagabond, and bereft of their dwellings, laid open the Field of Mars, and all the great edifices erected by Agrippa, and even his own gardens. He likewiſe cauſed tabernacles to be erected in haſte for the reception

of

of the forlorn populace; from Oſtia too, and the neighbouring cities were brought, by his orders all ſorts of furniture and neceſſaries, and the price of corn conſiderably leſſened. But theſe bounties, however generous and popular, were beſtowed in vain, becauſe a report was ſpread abroad, that, during the time of this general conflagration, he mounted his domeſtic ſtage, and ſung the deſtruction of Troy, comparing the preſent deſolation to the celebrated calamities of antiquity. At length on the ſixth day, the fury of the flames were ſtopped at the foot of Mount Eſquiline, by levelling with the ground an infinite number of buildings; ſo that the fire found nothing to encounter, but the open fields and empty air.

But ſcarcely had the late alarm ceaſed, when the fire broke out again with freſh rage, but in places more wide and ſpacious; whence fewer perſons were deſtroyed, but more temples overthrown, and porticoes appropriated to public diverſion. As the ſecond conflagration broke out in certain buildings belonging to Tigellinus, they were both generally aſcribed to Nero; and it was conjectured, that by deſtroying the old city, he aimed at the glory of building a new one, and calling it by his own name. Of the fourteen quarters into which Rome was divided, four remained entire, three were laid in aſhes, and in the ſeven others, there re-

mained only here-and-there a few houſes, miſerably ſhattered, and half conſumed. Among the many ancient and ſtately edifices, which the rage of the flames utterly conſumed, Tacitus reckons the temple dedicated by Servius Tullius to the Moon; the temple and great altar conſecrated by Evander to Hercules; the chapel vowed by Romulus to Jupiter Stator; the court of Numa, with the temple of Veſta, and in it the tutelar gods peculiar to the Romans. In the ſame fate were involved the ineſtimable treaſures acquired by ſo many victories, the wonderful works of the beſt painters and ſculptors of Greece; and, what is ſtill more to be lamented, the ancient writings of celebrated authors, till then preſerved perfectly entire. It was obſerved, that the fire began the ſame day on which the Gauls, having formerly taken the city, burnt it to the ground.

Whilſt the emperor Titus was in Campania, diſtributing immenſe ſums among the ſufferers by the eruption of Mount Veſuvius, a dreadful fire broke out at Rome, and reduced to aſhes a great many public and private buildings, the library of Auguſtus, with all the books lodged in it, a great part of the capitol, the theatre of Pompey, &c. This conflagration was followed by the moſt dreadful plague that ever raged at Rome.

In

In the 16th year of the reign of the emperor Antoninus, Rome ſuffered ſeveral calamities; the Tyber overflowing its banks, laid the lower parts of Rome under water. The inundation was followed by a fire, which conſumed a great part of the city; and a famine which ſwept off great numbers of the citizens. The ſame year the cities of Narbonne in Gaul, and Antioch in Syria, and the great ſquare at Carthage, were in great part conſumed by accidental fires. Univ. Hiſt. xv. 203.

In the year of Chriſt 188, great part of the capitol at Rome, a famous library, and ſeveral contiguous buildings, were utterly deſtroyed by lightning. Euſebius ſays, it conſumed whole quarters of the city, and in them ſeveral libraries. Univ. Hiſt. xv. 625.

In the year of Chriſt 191, under Commodus, a fire broke out in the night time in the celebrated temple of Peace. The temple, with all the buildings round it, were reduced to aſhes. That magnificent ſtructure had been raiſed by Veſpaſian after the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, and enriched with all the ſpoils and ornaments of the temple of the Jews. The ancients ſpeak of it as one of the moſt ſtately buildings in Rome. There men of learning uſed to hold their aſſemblies, and lodge their writings, as many others did their jewels, and whatever elſe they had of great value. It was likewiſe made uſe of for a

kind of magazine for the ſpices that were brought by the Roman merchants out of Egypt and Arabia; ſo that many rich perſons were at once reduced to beggary, all their valuable effects and treaſures being conſumed in one night, with the temple. Galen complains that many of his books were loſt by this misfortune.

The fire ſpread with great violence to other quarters of the city, and conſumed a great number of ſtately edifices, among the reſt the temple of Veſta. The veſtals fled to the palace with the ſtatue of Pallas, which was ſuppoſed to have been brought from Troy, and had never before been expoſed to public view; but the flames ſeized on the palace itſelf, and reduced great part of it to aſhes, before their rage could be ſtayed. The public papers and regiſters were with difficulty preſerved. The conflagration laſted ſeveral days, in ſpite of the utmoſt endeavours of the people, the ſoldiery, and the emperor himſelf, who returning on that occaſion from the country, expoſed his own perſon, in order to encourage others to exert themſelves by his example. It ceaſed at length of itſelf, or was extinguiſhed by a ſudden and violent rain; which they all looked upon as ſent by the gods. It was conceived to be begun alſo, as it was ended, by the gods, without human means.

Hammond, N. T. 924. a.

Univ. Hiſt. xv. 268.

Ptolemy

Ptolemy Soter founded an academy at Alexandria, or a ſociety of learned men; for the uſe of whom he made a collection of choice books, which under his ſucceſſors grew to prodigious bulk, and was reckoned the fineſt library in the world; and contained 700,000 volumes. The muſeum and library was at firſt in that quarter of the city called Brucium, afterward a ſupplemental library was erected within the Serapæum, called the daughter of the former. In the war which Julius Cæſar waged againſt the inhabitants of Alexandria, ſome of the ſhips which he was obliged to ſet on fire, to preſerve himſelf, driving on ſhore, communicated their flames to the adjoining houſes, which ſpreading into the quarter of the city called Brucium, conſumed the noble library, which had been the work of ſo many kings, and contained at that time 400,000 volumes, according to Seneca; but A. Gellus ſays, 700,000 volumes, which were all reduced to aſhes, and deſtroyed that illuſtrious monument of the good taſte of the kings of Egypt. But the library of Serapæum ſtill remained, and the manuſcripts contained therein when the other periſhed were at leaſt 500,000: there Cleopatra depoſited 200,000 volumes of the Pergamean library, which Mark Antony preſented her with. Theſe, and others added to them from time to time, rendered the new library

Univ. Hiſt. ix. 3-0. Modern Univ. Hiſt. i. 496.

at Alexandria more numerous and conſiderable than the former; and though it was plundered and robbed more than once during the troubles and revolutions which happened in the Roman empire, yet it was again and again repaired, and filled with the ſame number of books, and continued for many ages, to be of great fame and uſe in thoſe parts, till it was burnt by the Saracens, on their making themſelves maſters of Alexandria, in the 642d year of the Chriſtian æra.

The manner in which this laſt deſtruction was effected, is thus related: John, ſurnamed the Grammarian, a famous Peripatetic philoſopher, a man eminent for his extenſive erudition, being at Alexandria when it was taken by the Saracens, and in great favour with Amri-Abnol-As their general, he begged of him the royal library. Amri replied, that it was not in his power to grant ſuch a requeſt; but that he would write to the Khalif or emperor on that head, ſince without knowing his pleaſure, he dared not diſpoſe of one ſingle book. He acquainted the Khalif Omar with his friend's requeſt; his anſwer was, If the books contained the ſame doctrine with the Koran, they could be of no uſe, becauſe the Koran comprehended all neceſſary truths, if they contained what was contrary to that book, they ought not to be ſuffered; therefore he ordered, whatever

their

their contents were, they ſhould be all deſtroyed: accordingly they were diſtributed among the public baths, where for the ſpace of ſix months, they ſerved to ſupply the fires in thoſe places, whereof there were an incredible number in Alexandria. We may from thence form a juſt idea of the prodigious multitude of books lodged in that celebrated library. This ineſtimable treaſure of knowledge, which had been founded by a great encourager of learning, was utterly deſtroyed by an enthuſiaſtic tyrant, who by his religion, founded in ignorance, and made up of inconſiſtent fables, was inſpired with a bruti/h and irreconcileable hatred to all truth, learning, and politeneſs. This was the fatal end of that noble and ſtupendous library, at this time deſtroyed by fanatical madneſs; the loſs of which can never be ſufficiently regretted by the learned world.

The deſtruction of Judea is propheſied and deſcribed, 2 Pet. iii. 10, 12. by diſſolution, or conſumption by fire; which was exactly fulfilled at the burning Jeruſalem, a fearful combuſtion and conflagration! of which this is a literal deſcription from Joſephus: The Romans fired all unto Siloa; the Sicarii, a faction in the city, contrary to the zealots, got into vaults, from whence they fired the city more than the Romans, and murdered thoſe that eſcaping the flames fled into the caves. The Romans being entered, threw fire-

Hammond, on 2 Pet. iii. 10.

firebrands, fire-balls, granadoes, and ſuch like inſtruments of firing cities, then in uſe, and ſet the towers on fire, and fired the houſes, and many things that were fired were quenched with the blood of the ſlain, with which the ſtreets of the city flowed. All the night long the fire increaſed, and in the morning (Sept. 8.) all was on fire: and they fired the outward parts of the city. For burning the temple particularly, the ſilver plate of the doors being melted, the flame quickly fired the wood, and from thence increaſed to the next porch, and that day and all the next night the fire increaſed, till Titus cauſed the army to quench it: but the ſentence of God had already determined that it ſhould be conſumed by fire, and ſo it was, Aug. 10. when the fatal day was come after many years: a ſoldier without command caſt a firebrand into the golden gate, and preſently it ſet a flaming; and when Titus came violently in to quench it, nobody would hear him, but cried the more to ſet it on fire, and neither his commands nor intreaties would avail, but it was (abſolutely againſt his will) burnt down, and no help for it, becauſe the deſtinies had ſo determined, that is, the counſel and decree of God, teſtified by predictions.

Hammond, Rev. vi. 15. ix. 17.

The temple was burnt, and the prieſts hanged up; and upon an affront to Titus (refuſing to receive or take quarter from him) the

the ſoldiers were permitted to plunder and fire all.

A few days after the iſſuing of the firſt edicts of Diocleſian againſt the chriſtians, a fire broke out in the palace of Nicomedia, where Diocleſian and Galerius, were lodged, and reduced part of it to aſhes. Euſebius writes, that he could never know how that accident happened. Conſtantine, who was upon the ſpot, aſcribes it to lightning; and Lactantius aſſures us, that Galerius cauſed fire to be privately ſet to the palace, that he might lay the blame of it upon the chriſtians, and by that means incenſe Diocleſian ſtill more againſt them, which he did accordingly. Conſtantine tells us, that Diocleſian was ſo diſturbed by this accident, that henceforth he conſtantly imagined he ſaw lightning falling from heaven. Diocleſian's terror and diſmay were greatly increaſed, by a ſecond fire, which broke out in the palace fifteen days after the firſt, but was ſtopped before it had done any great miſchief. It had the effect which was intended by the author of it, Galerius; for Diocleſian, aſcribing it to the chriſtians, reſolved to keep no meaſures with them; and Galerius, the more to exaſperate him againſt them, withdrew to Nicomedia the ſame day; ſaying, he was afraid of being burnt alive by the chriſtians. Univ. Hiſt. xv. 502, 503.

When Theodoſius was conſul the fourteenth time, a dreadful fire broke out at Con- Univ. Hiſt. xvi. 546.

Conſtantinople, which laſted three days and conſumed all the public granaries, with many other ſtately edifices, and great part of the city.

Univ. Hiſt. xvi. 586. Anno 465, a violent fire breaking out at Conſtantinople on the ſecond of September, reduced to aſhes eight of the fourteen quarters into which that city was divided. It was not overcome till it had raged with incredible fury for the ſpace of ſix whole days and as many nights.

During the uſurpation of Baſilicus a dreadful fire happened at Conſtantinople, which ſoon conſumed great part of the city, with the library, containing one hundred and twenty thouſand volumes, and the works of Homer, written, as it is ſaid, in golden characters on the great gut of a dragon an hundred and twenty feet long.

Univ. Hiſt. xvii. 49. In the year 781, a dreadful fire happened at Conſtantinople, which conſumed great part of the city, with the patriarch's palace, in which were the comments of St. Chryſoſtom on the ſcripture, written with his own hand.

Univ. Hiſt. xvii. 87. The winter of the year 904 proved very ſevere; and the long froſt of an hundred and twenty days was followed by a dreadful plague which ſwept off incredible numbers of people; earthquakes were felt in ſeveral provinces, and whole cities overturned. At Con-

Conſtinople a fire broke out, which conſumed many ſtately buildings.

In 1203 happened a dreadful conflagration at Conſtantinople, occaſioned by ſome Latin ſoldiers, who having plundered a moſque, which the late emperor had ſuffered the Mohammedans to build in the imperial city, and being on that account attacked by the Turks, who were much ſuperior to them in number, ſet fire to ſome wooden houſes the better to favour their eſcape. The flame ſpreading in an inſtant from ſtreet to ſtreet, reduced in a ſhort time great part of the city to aſhes, with the capacious ſtore-houſes that had been built at a vaſt expence on the quay. Univ. Hiſt. xvii. 169. Verulam, 187.

In the fourteenth of Henry the ſeventh, a great fire in the night ſuddenly began at the king's palace at Shyne, near unto the king's own lodgings, whereby a great part of the building was conſumed, with much coſtly houſhold ſtuff: which gave the king an occaſion of building from the ground that fine pile of Richmond.

Tueſday May the tenth, 1631, the city of Magdeburg was taken by ſtorm: whilſt all was going to wrack, a mighty fire broke out, (how none could tell) it being a very windy day, all was on the ſudden become one great flame; the whole town was, within twelve hours ſpace, utterly turned to aſhes, except an hundred and thirty-nine houſes. Twenty thouſand people, at leaſt, were here killed, Ruſhworth's Collections, 185.

burnt, and ſmothered, whereof ſix thouſand were drowned in the Elbe.

Navarette, i. 211.

About the year 1648, a fire broke out in the church of St. Nicholas at Acapulco, which ſtood at the end of the town. It broke out about one o'clock, and about four all the town was almoſt reduced to aſhes. The wind carried the fire; the houſes were thatched, and dry as tinder. It burnt fiercely; the wind could carry a ſpark two hundred paces, which no ſooner fell upon a houſe, but the flames blazed up to the clouds. The bells of the monaſtery of St. Francis fell down; their fall, and the hole they made in ground, were the cauſe of diſcovering eight pieces of cannon hid there. The loſs of the royal apothecary's ſhop was deplorable; all the pots and veſſels were of fine China ware; and though the houſe was ſlated, that would not ſave it from utter ruin. All that was braſs remained, but much disfigured; a thouſand curioſities were burnt, with abundance of rich China ware, which, to ſave it from breaking, was packed up with cloves, pepper, and China ink.

Wagener, ii. 476.

In Auguſt 1656, a ſudden fire broke out on the north ſide of the city of Jedo, the capital of Japan, which being increaſed by a violent wind, laid not only the whole city (which might for its bigneſs be compared to a province) in aſhes in forty-eight hours, but alſo conſumed the royal palace, and near

an hundred and ſixty ſouls. About noon the fire got into the imperial palace, with ſuch violence, that in an inſtant the ſtrong towers and ſtone watch-houſes were ſeen tumbling into the ditch, where the fire ſtopped on that ſide; but continuing on the other hand, the emperor's lodgings were conſumed before night, he having ſcarce time given to retire with his chief counſellors to their ſummer-houſes, built on the north ſide at ſome diſtance from the palace; in ſhort, in two days time above an hundred thouſand houſes were laid in aſhes, inhabited by above a million of perſons; together with a vaſt number of ſtately palaces, and pagods or pagan temples.

July the ſixteenth, 1665, the grand ſeignior's ſeraglio at Conſtantinople was burnt to the ground, by a fire which they never knew how it came, nor could find any means to quench it. The damage not to be conceived. Annals of the univ. P. 134.

In November the ſame year another fire happened in the ſeraglio, which deſtroyed to the value of fourteen or fifteen millions. London Gazette, No. 5.

A great fire happening in the old palace at Conſtantinople, September the ſixth 1679, a boy found in the rubbiſh a diamond that weighed ninety-ſix carats, which he ſold for three paraces (about two-pence half-penny Engliſh), and the buyer reſold it for a zealot (about two ſhillings and ſixpence Engliſh) to a ſhop near ſultan Bajazet's moſque, where they Annals univ. 400.

they ſell ſtones for ſeals and pieces of chryſtal for rings; here it lay for ſome time unregarded, till at length the owner, finding no chapman for it, brought it to an Armenian to be ſet in ſilver, who being a jeweller ſoon apprehended the value of the ſtone; but the largeneſs of the ſize cauſing him to miſtruſt his own judgment, he conſulted two others; and upon trial found it a real diamond, ſo when the owner came for his ſtone, it was pretended to be loſt, and with a dollar and a half contented him; but the jewellers diſagreeing in the diviſion of ſo large a purchaſe, and one fearing to be betrayed by the other, he that had it in poſſeſſion diſcovered it, and ſent it to the grand ſeignior.

Church. voyages, vol. iv. p. 78.

It was firſt purchaſed for three-pence or a groat, next parted with for two ſhillings; and the ſtone being good, the ſultan Mahomet heard of it, and bought it, and had it cut: it was ſo large and fine that it was valued at an hundred thouſand crowns.

London Gazette, No. 173.

On the twenty-ſixth of May 1667, there happened a great fire at Archangel, which beginning in the butchery, where no inhabitants were, gave a ſuſpicion that it was maliciouſly kindled: from a ſmall beginning it ſpread with ſuch violence, that having in a little ſpace of time conſumed three back ſtreets, it ſeized upon the great trade-yards and warehouſes of the Engliſh, Dutch, and Ruſſian merchants, with the hall, and cuſtom-

tom-houſe, and the greateſt part of the beſt buildings in the town. Beſide other things of value, there were twenty-five thouſand tuns of hemp, a great quantity of pot-aſh and other goods, valued at four hundred thouſand rixdollars: all the buildings by the waterſide were conſumed, with the church before the caſtle, where, at the laſt, it ſtopped. The Dutch merchants were ſaid to have the greateſt loſs.

About 1689, a great fire happened at Prague, in the Jews quarter, who were before thirty thouſand ſtrong, and had thirteen ſynagogues; two years after they had but two ſynagogues, and the ruins of a great many houſes remained. It was generally ſaid there, that the French burnt the town: there were three perſons executed for it; and a merchant of the town, a Frenchman, ſo tortured that he never recovered the uſe of his limbs; but none confeſſed. J. Chamberlyne's MS.

On the ninth of January, 1702-3, a fire broke out at Port-Royal in Jamaica, with ſuch violence, and raged with ſuch fury that there was no ſtopping it, till it had deſtroyed every houſe and warehouſe to aſhes in that fine flouriſhing city. It breaking out about noon, the merchants ſaved moſtly their money and books of accompts, and ſome of them conſiderable quantities of merchandize, by aſſiſtance of boats from the men of war and ſhips in the harbour; though ſuch of Lond. Mag. May 1759. p. 239.

them as were near the ſhore were in great danger, and one brigantine and a ſloop were burnt.

October the eighteenth, 1759, letters from Conſtantinople inform us, that a terrible fire happened at Salonica, the capital of Macedonia, whereby upwards of four thouſand houſes were reduced to aſhes, and ſome hundreds of men, women, children, and ſick perſons, periſhed in the flames.

On the ninth of June 1763, a village named Volenſtraus, ſix miles from Sultſbach, which had already been burnt down four times, and ſince the laſt, rebuilt in a moſt beautiful manner, was deſtroyed by fire a fifth time. The fire broke out in the afternoon in the market-place which, by the violence of the wind, in leſs than half an hour ſet fire to the whole market, wherein one hundred fifty-two dwelling houſes, an hundred and one barns, the church, ſteeples and bells, the town-houſe, with the records, the proteſtant and Romiſh places of public worſhip, together with all their effects and libraries, and all the ſchools, were reduced to aſhes; and but few ſmall habitations left ſtanding. All endeavours to extinguiſh the flames proved ineffectual; ſo that the unfortunate inhabitants preſerved little or nothing of their effects, moſt of them having enough to do to ſave their own lives: their diſtreſs was very great, being left without cloaths, money,

money, or bread. Some perſons were unfortunately burnt, and many greatly hurt.

December thirteenth, 1764. The town of Freudenthal in Upper Sileſia, was conſumed by fire, inſomuch that only twenty-ſix houſes remain. The town-houſe, the public ſchool, the church, the ſhops of the foreign merchants, who were come to aſſiſt at the fair, which was to have been held on the twelfth paſt, are all conſumed, nothing being ſaved. The burgher-maſter Schilder was killed by the fall of one of the walls of his own houſe; ſeveral others periſhed; and thoſe that eſcaped are overwhelmed with misfortune. The fire began (by what accident is unknown) between ten and eleven o'clock at night, and burned till the next morning.

On May fourteenth, 1766, a moſt direful conflagration happened at Bridgetown, the capital of Barbadoes in the Weſt Indies, which began by a merchant's clerk going to bed leaving a candle burning by him. It began in the High-ſtreet half after eleven at night, and raged with inconceivable violence until nine the next morning. The number of houſes conſumed, including public buildings and ſtores, was computed at one thouſand one hundred and forty, many of them well ſtored with merchandize; which comprehended two thirds of the town. The loſs was eſtimated at half a million currency, and the houſes which remained were not ſufficient

cient to receive those deprived of their habitations by the flames. On this calamitous occasion, the legislative body of the island was called together, which immediately took into consideration every expedient for the relief of the distressed sufferers, and for rebuilding the town; which they were enabled to undertake, by the noble subscriptions made for that purpose all over Great Britain.